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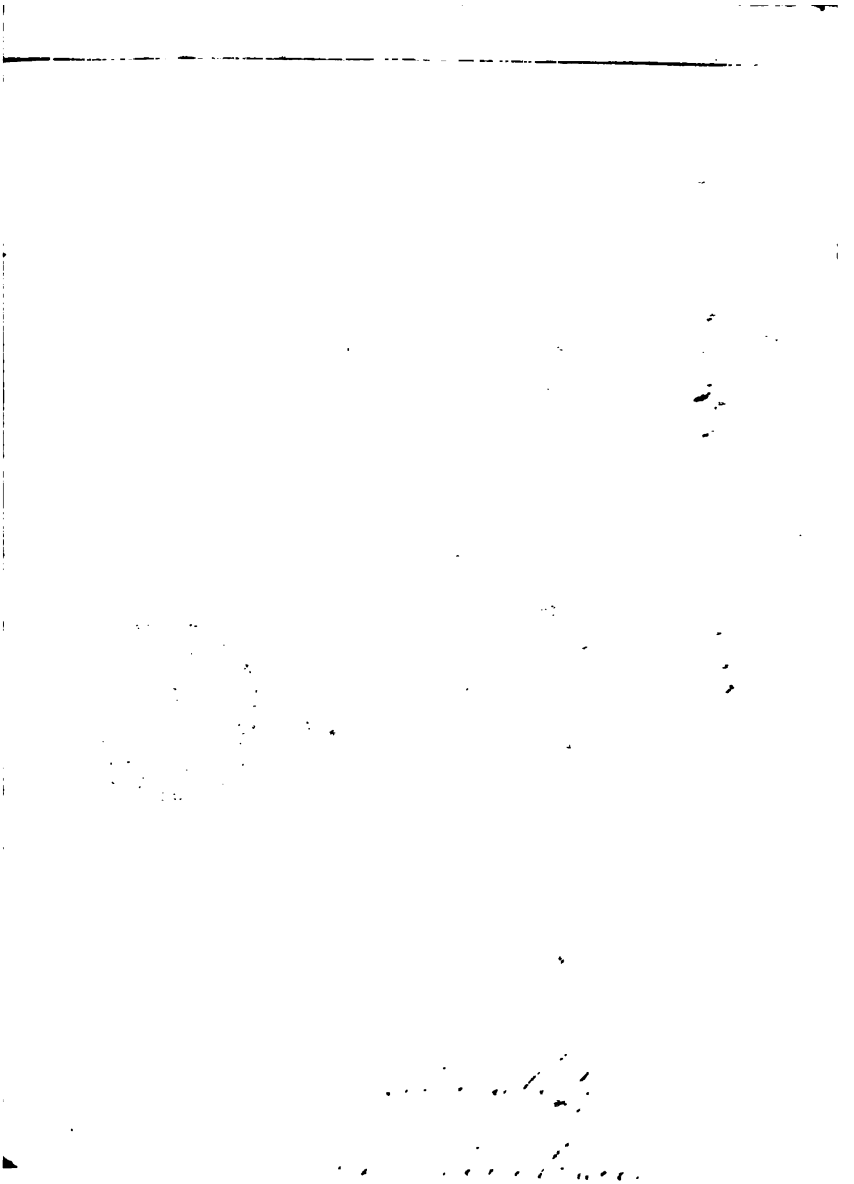
Yours affectionately

Charles March.

Yours affectionately

Charles March.



MEMORIALS

OF

CHARLES MARCH,

COMMANDER, R.N.

BY HIS NEPHEW

SEPTIMUS MARCH, B.A.

"Whose life was work, whose language rife
With rugged maxims hewn from life."
TENNYSON.

"The memory of the just is blessed."—PROV. x. 7.

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CHAPTER I.

Prefatory.

PREFATORY.

A SOMEWHAT massive head, thin gray locks, blue eyes overhung by shaggy brows, that seemed to tell their own tale of night-watches, and peerings-out through fog and mist and darkness and sea-scud, and lines of humour round a mouth that indicated firmness ;—such is the image of my old uncle's face that rises before me when I hear his name or recall his memory. A robust frame of middle height, a slight stoop, and a gait which had in it a little of the seaman's slouch, complete the portrait.

It would not be so easy to give his mental and moral characteristics. Shrewd, practical, frank, fearless, kind, genial, inventive, active, simple of habit and manner, godly, all who knew him acknowledged him to be.

This is the man whose life I purpose briefly to record, impelled by the certain knowledge that a wide circle of his friends will welcome the volume as a memorial of one they loved and honoured, and by the fervent hope that this example of manly, sunny piety, ripening through a happy, though chequered life of more than threescore years and ten, may be in-

structive to many Christians, and fraught with highest good to those who have not yet taken that decisive step which will ally them with God and happiness in time and eternity.

As I look back on the career of Captain March, and see all the blessings that accrued from his early consecration to Christ, and how in every stage of his history there was clear testimony to the truth of the apostle's words, "Godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come," I think its record may be of great advantage to such as are just entering on manhood's duties, and hope earnestly that it will lead some to say, "Oh satisfy us early with Thy mercy, that we may rejoice and be glad all our days."

> "Blessed are those who die for God,
> And earn the martyr's crown of light,
> Yet he who lives for God may be
> A greater conqueror in His sight."

Not a few of late have been the biographies, touching and useful, of those who, having heartily embraced the religion of Jesus Christ, have been called away from the scene of their earthly labour whilst comparatively young. An exclusive reading of such memoirs has led some to connect early piety and early death, as though the latter were in some way consequent on the former. It is not with such associations that God would have us regard the Word of Life, the love and observance of which tend, not

only to eternal happiness, but to a prolongation of the present existence. Concerning the heavenly wisdom I read, "Length of days is in her right hand, and in her left hand riches and honour; her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace." The truth of this inspired statement will, I think, be demonstrated in the following pages.

To the seaman also, this work will especially address itself. Many are his temptations, whatever may be his years or his post. Forced, by the narrow bounds of a vessel, into close contact with the ungodly, often unable through stress of weather to enjoy the quiet of retirement and the privilege of a Sabbath rest, and visiting strange ports, where vice, infidelity, and superstition are painfully prominent, some are disposed to consider that the sailor is most unfavourably circumstanced for the development of piety. This volume will, I think, show that strict principle may be maintained, and a high spiritual life nurtured, by him whose calling it is to traverse the seas; nay more, will point out how there is much in the surroundings of such a vocation that will tend to awaken admiration of the great Creator, and a child-like trust in Him "who hath measured the waters in the hollow of His hand," and "bringeth the wind out of His treasuries."

Lessons there are also for all disciples in this simple narrative of one who interwove his religion with every detail of daily life, who eagerly embraced opportunities of doing good, often making them when he could not

find them, and whose Christianity was of that cheery nature that won upon the careless, and disarmed the prejudices of the hostile.

The chief portion of the record of Captain March's seafaring experience is compiled from rough notes which he made as a sort of personal "log" of his voyage through the vicissitudes of this world to the bliss of a better. Bald, fragmentary, and imperfect as these are, many parts scarcely legible, being jotted down as the ship was rolling on its course, it is certain that he never contemplated their meeting the public eye in any form. Yet could he know that the perusal of any of the facts they contain would be the means of comforting, strengthening, or saving a single soul, he would I am sure sanction their reproduction.

May these pages further the one supreme object cherished by him of whom they speak, the extension of Christ's kingdom.

CHAPTER II.

Early Days.

Often I think of the beautiful town
That is seated by the sea;
Often in thought go up and down
The pleasant streets of that dear old town,—
And my youth comes back to me.
And a verse of a Lapland song
Is haunting my memory still;
'A boy's will is the wind's will,
And the thoughts of youth are long, long
thoughts.'"

—LONGFELLOW.

EARLY DAYS.

A PLEASANT town is Barnstaple, the capital of North Devon. Situated on the banks of the Taw, a tidal river, and surrounded by rich arable and pasture land, it combines some of the advantages of the port with those of an agricultural centre. Vessels of moderate burden unload their freights at its quays; and the neighbourhood, from many miles round, flocks periodically to its market. With its old bridge of sixteen arches, its quaint buildings, its sweet walks through fertile valleys and over wooded slopes, it has many charms for the lover of the picturesque.

Thither, some time about the year 1779, came one Richard March out of Leicestershire, a man of good family and considerable means, and, withal, of a practical turn of mind, and fond of machinery to an extent that rather disgusted some of his aristocratic relatives, who considered a factory an inexcusable vulgarity. His taste for the mechanical sciences had led to his taking out various patents of inventions—one of which, for a lock-stitch weaving machine, proved substantially remunerative. This same propensity had thrown him into the society of some of

the more eminent manufacturers of that day. His knowledge of Sir Richard Arkwright was intimate; and while the latter was defending one of his patents from infringement, Mr March, by supplying technical information to the legal advisers, afforded him such aid as brought the matter to a successful issue—a fact heartily acknowledged by Sir Richard at the time, and gratefully remembered by his descendants.

Richard March brought his proclivities with him to Barnstaple; and, in conjunction with a few partners, amongst whom were the Barings of Exeter, proceeded to the erection of a factory for weaving woollen yarn and flannels, at a site some half mile from the town named Rawleigh. Here, picturesquely perched, the structure was reared. The stream that had before been only musical, was harnessed to the wheel and converted into water-power, and in that quiet valley of Devon the unwonted sound of looms was heard. The buildings still stand, though their original use has long since been changed, and the brook now works the machinery of a furniture factory.

Richard March was twice married. His second wife was Mary Colley, of North Devon, who, like himself, had a distinguished descent. The pedigree, still in the family, is traced back through the Colleys and Fiennes up to Agnes, the sister of William of Wykeham. Any further reference to this would, I know, be deprecated by the simple-minded subject

of this memoir, who esteemed men for what they were, and not for what their fathers had been; and who thought that, whilst they who enjoyed good parentage had the greater responsibility, those who from humble origin raised themselves by their industry and integrity to a good position, deserved most respect.

Richard March dwelt in his own house in Bontport Street, a long two-storied building, now converted into two shops. Here he received many guests; and not a few were the illustrious men who, passing through the town, came to look over his factory, which was then a wonder to the neighbourhood. He had twelve children by his first wife, nine by his second. On one occasion, when the Duke of Bedford and the then Lord John Russell were under his roof, he came in leading his youngest daughter Catherine by the hand, and introduced her as his "twenty-first."

Youngest but one of this large family was Charles, who was born December 15th, 1793. As a lad he was good-natured, courageous, and active; so unselfish, and so eager to help everybody in every way that he could, that he was an universal favourite. It is not to be wondered at that, with such a disposition and in such a place, he should become possessed of a longing for the excitements and novelties of a seafaring life. Everything around him was calculated both to awaken and foster this desire. The river

winding its way through sandhills and over the moaning bar to its ocean home; the quay with its blithe sailors and foreign produce, that told their own suggestive tales of romantic countries basking in tropic summers below the horizon; and the outward-bound vessel, with spreading sail, pressing eagerly down on the ebbing tide, to be rocked and cradled on the bosom of the deep;—all these must have had their effect on his mind. Sometimes he would climb to the summit of Codden Hill, whence the Channel could be seen flecked with sails, Lundy Isle sleeping in the hazy distance, and the sun sinking behind the belt of blue waters. Sometimes amongst the shipping he would amuse himself by exploring the mysterious depths of holds, or climbing to the mast-head, where he would twirl the vane in triumph. Often, doubtless, he watched with a curious eye the rising of the tide, and was pleased to notice how, under its magic influence, the poor dead, stranded boat, heeled over on its side, became a thing of life and gracefulness, nodding to every wavelet that broke on its bows, and pulling at its moorings, as if impatient to career away on the rapid currents.

An incident narrated by his eldest sister occurred before he was yet in his teens, which led to the recognition by his family of his qualifications for that mode of life, his desire for which he had already expressed with boyish eagerness. He was in a boat on the river with three of his elder brothers; one of these

was bathing, when, owing either to the strength of the current or fatigue, he began to sink, and called for help. The two elder brothers in the boat seized each an oar, that they might go to his rescue; but such was their alarm that their strokes were wild, and the boat was propelled rather from than towards the drowning lad. Charles, with a rudeness that the emergency fully justified, pushed his brothers aside, and laying hold of the oars with complete presence of mind, and steady hand, pulled the boat directly to the desired spot, when they drew the exhausted and almost lifeless boy on board. All three lads, on their return home, generously extolled their youngest brother; and the parents, with pride and joy in their hearts, declared that he was born to be a sailor.

CHAPTER III.

The Royal Navy.

"We left behind the painted buoy
That tosses at the harbour mouth;
And madly danced our hearts with joy,
As fast we fleeted to the south:
How fresh was every sight and sound
On open main or winding shore!
We knew the merry world was round,
And we might sail for evermore."

—TENNYSON.

THE ROYAL NAVY.

IT was at length settled that the lad should enter the Royal Navy. In the December of 1807, having just completed his thirteenth year, he blithely left his home to serve as a volunteer of the first class on board H.M.S. *Hindostan*, under Captain, afterwards Admiral, Hole, to whom, as he was a friend of the family, the boy was more readily intrusted. It was early to begin to buffet with all the temptations of life, but as seamanship can be acquired only by an early apprenticeship, his parents consented to spare him. His intelligence and good-nature tended much to smooth a course that otherwise might have been rugged.

Of the next nine years of his life there is but scanty reliable information. Young as he was, he carefully entered in a journal the movements and exploits of the vessels in which he sailed, but this, being subsequently lent to some friend for perusal, has for years disappeared. Should these pages meet the eye of its possessor, it is hoped it may lead to a restoration of the same to the family. Were it, however, in the writer's hands, it is probable that he would introduce

but little of its contents into this memoir, for during the whole of that time, there was no vital religion in the heart of him who penned it; and this volume purposes more especially to notice such of his adventures and experience as were connected with the growth and maintenance of his robust piety, and illustrate his unswerving conscientiousness. Anecdotes of that eventful period of his history are more or less imperfectly remembered by those of his relatives to whom he would sometimes speak of his boyish days. There is not space, if it were desirable, for the admission of these.

From the tabulated statement of Charles March's services in the Royal Navy, and from R. O'Byrne's "Naval Biographical Dictionary," we learn how in 1808 he became midshipman of the sloop *Egeria* cruising off the coast of Spain and Portugal, and in the North Sea, and assisting in the capture of two French privateers and one cutter; and how in 1812 he acted as master's mate in the *Cornwall*, employed with the fleet off Flushing and Brest, and in 1813 rejoined Captain Hole on the *Bacchus*. The nephew of Admiral Hole, a messmate of our young seaman, narrates as a proof of the confidence reposed in him by his superiors at this time, when his years numbered but twenty, that he was put in charge of a vessel recaptured from the French, and took her safely into Dartmouth harbour. We can easily imagine the combined feelings of pleasure, pride, and responsibility with

which he took the sole command of this ship, and, having brought her to her destination, delivered her up to the authorities. The same sources tell us that in this year Charles March served in the *Woodlark* that cruised for two years in the Mediterranean, removing as "Admiralty Midshipman" in July 1816 to the *Superb*, commanded by Captain Charles Ekins, one of the ships composing the fleet of which Lord Exmouth was the Admiral.

And now there seemed a prospect of more active service than had yet fallen to the lot of our young midshipman. Preparations were made for an expedition, the precise destination of which was not for some time known. Every day, Sundays excepted, the crew were exercised at the guns, and on Tuesdays and Fridays the fleet cleared for action, when each ship fired six broadsides. No wonder if, amidst such scenes of pleasurable excitement, the horrors of war were lost sight of, and the thought of carnage was displaced by the anticipation of deeds of daring and achievements of glory.

At length it was generally understood that Lord Exmouth was instructed to proceed with the fleet to Algiers, to put a stop, if possible, to the piracies committed by the Barbary States. The Algerine Corsairs had long been the dread of the Mediterranean. They were, owing to the increasing naval power of the larger European nations, more cautious than they had been of assailing their merchant vessels; but on

the smaller states, Naples and Sardinia in particular, they continued their depredations, seizing their ships, making descents on their shores and carrying off both property and persons. Every year they secured much booty and large sums of money for ransoms, and dragged hundreds of human creatures into a degrading state of slavery. Their cruelties were notorious. It had been ascertained that in one case, out of three hundred prisoners whom they had captured, fifty died of ill-treatment on the first day of their arrival, and seventy more during the first fortnight. The survivors were kept in a miserable condition, allowed only one pound of bread per diem, and subject to the lash from morning till night. A Neapolitan lady of distinction, who had been carried off with her eight children, was seen by a British officer in the thirteenth year of her captivity. Remonstrances had been made and treaties entered into with the Algerines, but their perfidy seemed ineradicable, and it was evident that they would continue their easy and profitable mode of livelihood as long as they could and dared, and that nothing but force would induce them to exchange their lawless plundering for honest industry. That force the British nation was determined to exert. A fresh outrage precipitated this purpose. Many vessels belonging to different European states had been in the habit of assembling at Bona, to engage in the pearl fishery, and paying a considerable sum of money were protected by, and so of course from, the Algerine

pirates. Suddenly their guardians became their foes, and massacred them without mercy.

Under such circumstances, it was natural that those who sailed with Lord Exmouth should view the expedition as made in defence of the common rights of humanity.

Early in July, the British fleet, composed of five ships of the line and eighteen smaller vessels, set sail for the Mediterranean, and was joined at Gibraltar by a Dutch squadron under Admiral Capellen.

In the meanwhile, the Dey of Algiers, having received intimation of the purpose of the allied fleets, proceeded to strengthen the sea-defences and the fortifications on the land side, which nature and art had already rendered very formidable, and armed men to the number of forty thousand were brought in from the surrounding country. On the 27th of August the fleet appeared in sight, and moderate terms were immediately offered to the Algerines, consisting simply of the liberation of the consul, who had been thrust into close confinement, the abolition of Christian slavery, the release of the captives then in the city, and the repayment of all ransoms obtained since the commencement of the year. An hour was granted for a reply, and on its being objected that this was an inadequate period, two or three hours were allowed; and the captain of the port declared that two would be sufficient. The

boat that had conveyed these requirements, under a flag of truce, waited three hours and a half for an answer; none was given, and the fleet began to take up its position. The flag-ship *Queen Charlotte* was moored in front of the Mole, a strong fortification surrounded by four batteries. The *Superb*, with our young midshipman on board, anchored two hundred and fifty yards astern of the *Queen Charlotte*. And now all was ready for action. A profound silence reigned, like the breathless pause of nature that precedes the fury of the tempest. Lord Exmouth began to hope that the Dey would yet comply with the offered terms, when three shots were fired from the batteries, and the strife began. For a long while it was an uncertain conflict, and a matter of doubt whether the stone ramparts or the "wooden walls" would be the first to yield. At one time much uneasiness was felt when Admiral Milne of the *Impregnable* communicated that he had lost a hundred and fifty killed and wounded, and was in urgent need of a frigate to divert the heavy fire brought to bear on his vessel. Shrouded in dense smoke the huge line-of-battle ships discharged broadside after broadside, whilst threading their way between these floating forts, gun, rocket, and mortar boats poured forth their destructive missiles. Thus the contest raged on into the night, till at last the fire from the shore began perceptibly to slacken, and many of their fortifications being crumbled into ruins, their arsenals

and ships in the harbour wrapped in one vast blaze, the Algerines appeared desirous of capitulating.

The whole scene must have been strange and terrible. Vessels and hills belching fire, shells bursting, magazines exploding, rockets rushing through the air, whilst human shouts and cries mingled with the sound of falling buildings and crashing timber. The very elements seemed to have caught the contagion of strife, for at half-past ten a storm raged, the lightnings gleaming in the heavens, and the thunders reverberating as if in answer to the roar of the cannon.

All the while, in the thick of the fight, underneath the canopy of smoke, amongst the excited fighting men, our young sailor played his part bravely and earnestly. His was the first vessel that was struck; and so close had she been moored to the batteries, that all her upper rigging was completely torn away. During the action he received a wound, from which the blood streamed, but refusing to be put on the sick list he continued in the discharge of his duties. The piece of canister shot that had struck him he carried in his breast till his dying day. At another time, as he was standing with an officer on the deck, the latter dropped something which Charles stooped to pick up for him. Whilst in the very act a chain-shot flew over his bent form, which, but for his momentary change of position, would have proved his instant death. Speaking of the circumstance in after-

life he said, "Had the shot struck me, what would have become of my poor soul!"

The end of the bombardment was answered. The original terms were agreed to, and a treaty of peace signed. The consul was liberated, and received compensation for the insults he had endured; captives to the number of one thousand and eighty-three were set at liberty; and ransoms amounting to three hundred and eighty-two thousand five hundred dollars were repaid to Sicily and Sardinia.

The claims of Charles March for promotion after this engagement being set before the Admiralty and supported by the Duke of Roxburghe,— who more than once had been a guest under his father's roof, and had always taken a kindly interest in the affairs of the family,—were allowed, and he was made "lieutenant for rank" of the sloop *Contest* on the 16th of September 1816.

Amidst all the tumult and danger of war, amidst the solemn strife of the elements, there came to this young man's soul no sense of God, no conviction of sin, no consciousness of a need of forgiveness. It was left for the ordinary means of grace as enjoyed in the quiet of his own native land to touch his heart and probe his conscience. In the hush of the sanctuary it was that he first listened to the "still, small voice" of the Holy Spirit as it rebuked him for his indifference to a Saviour's love, and called him to a loving trust in the Redeemer of mankind.

CHAPTER IV.

A Fresh Wound.

"And a certain man drew a bow at a venture, and smote the king of Israel between the joints of the harness: wherefore he said unto the driver of his chariot, Turn thine hand, and carry me out of the host, for I am wounded."—1 KINGS xxii. 34.

"Who would not suffer pain like mine
To be consoled like me!"

—L. A. WARING.

A FRESH WOUND.

THE fleet having returned from its successful expedition, Charles March again trod the streets of his native town. Changes had taken place in the home since his departure. His father had been dead nearly twelve months, leaving his family in comparatively straitened circumstances; speculations, experiments, and inventions having exhausted the bulk of his property. The days of mourning slowly passed, and the kindly hand of Time having removed sorrow from the mind of the now fatherless son, he mingled cheerfully in the social gatherings which were not unfrequent amongst his somewhat wide circle of acquaintance. The young lieutenant who had borne an active part in the bombardment of Algiers, with his honours fresh upon him, was for a time almost a "lion;" and frequented balls and parties with readiness and delight, his freedom from all affectation and his genial disposition making him deservedly popular. At this time he was certainly a "lover of pleasure more than a lover of God."

One Sabbath afternoon an elder brother, in whose mind religious impressions had for some time dwelt,

requested Charles to accompany him to the village of Heanton, to hear the Rev. J. Merry, a clergyman whose singular devotedness and zeal, and whose sermons, characterised as they were by an earnest evangelical teaching, excited the opposition and ridicule of the ungodly, by whom he was styled the "Methodist parson." With good-natured readiness Charles at once assented and entered into the little parish church as he had often gone before into many a similar sanctuary, little thinking that he would come forth with an impulse upon him that was to change the current of his being, and that was to develop into the guiding principle of his whole life. The preacher "drew a bow at a venture," but the arrow, winged by the Holy Spirit and directed by Divine power, speeded to its mark. The young man was wounded afresh, and the word of truth, like the Algerine shot, remained with him to the end of life.

For months his soul was troubled, for though he had seen his error and danger, he had not yet laid hold on eternal life. His friends, wondering at the change that had passed over his sunny nature, were perplexed and displeased. At length He who wounded, healed. All the old cheerfulness returned, and was deepened into a permanent peace. The "broken cistern," from which earthly happiness would gradually have leaked away, was exchanged for the perennial fount of Divine joy. He who had lost an earthly parent, had found a Heavenly Father.

In a letter to his Aunt Colley written a year or two after this occurrence, and from which we give a single extract, he narrates the circumstances of his conversion with characteristic simplicity.

"LIVERPOOL.

"You will remember, I have no doubt, that I went to hear Mr Merry preach at Heanton; some of the heads of his discourse I related to you at the time. After this I was so convinced of my sins that I had not the smallest hope of heaven, for I felt I had no power to leave them off and repent. I then prayed for weeks and months together that God would send me His Holy Spirit to teach me the way of salvation. I wrote out forms of prayer, for I found in no book a prayer wherein all my wants were expressed. God was pleased to answer my supplication when He knew that it came from my heart. I daily read the New Testament, praying each time that God would give me wisdom and knowledge to understand its true spiritual meaning. I now rejoice to say that of late God has been mercifully pleased to hear my prayers. I now have not only a hope, but an assurance that I shall go to heaven through the alone merits of Jesus Christ, and none of my own. I have now much consolation and happiness, and sometimes 'rejoice with joy unspeakable.'"

In the Life of the Rev. J. Merry the following extract from a portion of his diary, dated May 17,

1823, and referring to the same circumstance, is to be found :—"It is also at this time my especial duty to praise God for His abundant loving-kindness to me. I lately received a letter from a naval officer, communicating the welcome tidings that several years ago the Lord awakened him to a sense of his sinfulness, and made him a new creature in Christ Jesus through means of my preaching, while at Heanton, Devonshire. He was residing in the neighbourhood at the time, but I neither saw nor heard of him till I received this intelligence a few weeks ago. How great is God's goodness to me that this seal should be given to my ministry during our temporary residence in that corner of the world."

A memorable Sabbath to more than one soul through eternity, will be that on which the young lieutenant entered the little church at Heanton. The service closes, the sound of singing dies away, the congregation disperses, but a new song arises in the upper sanctuary. There is joy among the angels in heaven over a repenting sinner. The good man who has broken the bread of life may be saying sadly, "Who hath believed our report?" but, though he hears it not then, there is one soul that answers "I."

CHAPTER V.

A New Commission.

"Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?"—ACTS ix. 6.

"Wherever in the world I am,
In whatsoe'er estate,
I have a fellowship with hearts
To keep and cultivate:
And a work of lowly love to do
For the Lord on whom I wait."

—A. L. WARING.

A NEW COMMISSION.

THE soil on which the seed was thus cast was not altogether uncongenial. The precious grain did not fall on a "wayside" trodden almost impenetrably hard by half a century of the passing to and fro of worldly thoughts, nor, though it sprung up quickly, did it fall on "stony ground" where, a little earth covering a substratum of rock, the emotions being superficial and hypocritical, it could not take root. Nor, though of course it fell among some thorns, were they grown so thick and sturdy as completely to stifle the efforts of the new germination. It fell on a heart naturally depraved, sinful in its neglect of God, and yet, in the sense used by our Saviour, on "good ground,"—on the soul of one who had been living without God, but had been surrounded by few religious advantages; who had been heedless of divine truth, but had not habitually repressed deep convictions; who had transgressed, but, like Paul, to a great extent "ignorantly and in unbelief." Hence there was considerable rapidity in the development of his piety. Distress of mind was not so protracted as in many cases, the struggle with evil habits was scarcely so severe as

that through which some have had to pass, and assurance was in a comparatively short time obtained. "The blade, the ear, the full corn in the ear" followed in quick succession, and the word brought forth fruit, whether "thirty-fold, sixty-fold, or an hundred-fold," the day will declare. Through mercy, Charles March remembered his Creator ere the evil days of weakness and physical infirmity drew nigh. With all the prime of life still before him, noble ambitions took possession of his soul, and he felt it a blessing to be.

He received a new commission, and as he had volunteered to serve king and country, he now desired to devote his energies to God, opposing evil, defending truth and speaking of Christ to his fellow-creatures. The idea of toiling for his divine Master as a minister or missionary appears never to have entered his mind—he had no wish to quit his old vocation, but hoped to make it the means of extending his usefulness; and there can be no doubt that he thus accomplished more for the cause and kingdom of Christ than would have been possible had he undergone the discipline of a college course and then confined his labour to some special corner of the earth.

His first attention was directed to his relatives, and to one whose kindness had much touched him, and whose years led him to speak with diffidence, he wrote an earnest appeal, a few sentences of which are here inserted as indicative of his clear views and affectionate zeal. "Let me entreat you," he says,

"not to suffer your mind to be prejudiced against what I shall say by fancying that I am become a fanatic or Methodist: on the contrary, I still continue to go to church and to places where men preach like the Rev. J. Merry, I mean gospel or evangelical ministers. . . . We are apt to think that God made us merely to enjoy His earthly blessings for a time, and then if we lead a moral life we shall reach heaven; but He created us for His glory. . . . You have been pleased to compliment me for being devout and attentive at church; but could you have looked into my heart and seen where my thoughts were, you would have exclaimed, 'O thou whited sepulchre, is it possible you can be such a hypocrite!' At this time I rested in a form of godliness without knowing anything of the power, and resembled the Roman Catholics, who go to their churches, count their beads, swallow their wafer, kiss their wooden saints, and think that all is well. And yet I positively swore when I took up my commission that I believed this religion to be a 'damnable heresy.' I remember perfectly well being in church one Sunday forenoon when my thoughts were the whole time in Bristol, and yet, as I considered that I had endeavoured to do my duty, I imagined that that was sufficient for me: thus mocking God I treated Him with the greatest contempt. Had I served a nobleman of the land in such a manner he would summarily have dismissed me from his presence. . . . Faith only, or a steadfast,

firm, and immovable belief in Christ is the condition of our salvation; but let not our faith deceive us, it must be accompanied by good works or else is dead. . . . What folly it is for us to be endeavouring to establish a righteousness of our own! Why not let us at once take God at His word. But no, we must interfere, and when that is the case God leaves it to ourselves; and what do we make of it? Nothing more than a 'filthy rag' that would not cover one poor, bare sin. Or suppose we were to get to heaven by our own good works, we should not love or thank God for it; and after all what a pretty figure we should cut amongst the angels. I believe we should soon wish ourselves out of it, for it would be a complete hell to us. Surely we have no more reason to pride ourselves on our good works than the peacock on its beautiful plumage. Says St Paul, 'by the grace of God I am what I am.' . . . 'Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God.' There are many passages in the Scriptures which tell us how we shall know when we are born again. 'The Spirit beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God.' 'We know that we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren.' 'But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them that despitefully use you and persecute you; that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven.' 'But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy,

peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance.' . . . How many believe the Bible just as they do the History of England, and there it ends, for they do not apply to God to grant them wisdom and strength and knowledge."

So, fulfilling the spirit of the injunction, "beginning at Jerusalem," the recent convert addressed himself to the delicate and trying task of endeavouring to arouse some of his own kinsfolk to a full appreciation of the teaching of the New Testament. His frank, unaffected mode of speech, rendering his remarks free from suspicion of cant, made them all the more effective. But it was his desire, and afterwards became his privilege, to exert an influence far beyond the bounds of his own family circle.

Promotion being at an end in the navy, owing to the peace, Lieutenant Charles March retired on half-pay, and sought other employment, turning his attention to the merchant service, yet always ready to serve king and country should occasion demand. At first he was unsuccessful in obtaining the command of a trading vessel, for there existed amongst ship-owners a great prejudice, not altogether without foundation, against naval officers. Accustomed to the management of huge men-of-war, they were, many of them, very inexperienced in the navigation of smaller craft, and not a few of them assumed such airs of superiority as proved annoying to those in whose service they were engaged. Charles March

however, manifested no impatience at the delay, but quietly waited his time, employing it, as best he could, for his own instruction and the glory of God. He now spent a year or two with his brother Henry, who, much against the wish of his family, had studied for and entered on the pastoral work as a congregational minister, and was exercising the sacred duties of his office at Bungay, in Suffolk.

Here, then, the young lieutenant sojourned for many happy months, attending devoutly on the means of grace, visiting the sick and bereaved, teaching in the Sabbath school, and going from house to house in the various villages of the neighbourhood to converse with men and women about their souls' welfare. His brother found his aid invaluable, and the people regarded him with feelings of respect and attachment.

Thus God prepared His servant for future scenes of trial and strenuous activity, by a peaceful period of soul culture amidst the fertile plains and quiet agricultural life of eastern England. The disappointment in not at once finding employment for his nautical experience and skill, was over-ruled for his highest good, and became a blessing, whose influences attended him on earth, and have doubtless followed him to heaven.

Whilst the two brothers were thus co-operating for one great end, their mother died at Barnstaple, uttering words of holy wish and humble confidence. Her

thoughts turning to her children, she exclaimed, "Oh, may He bring them all into one fold!" and addressing herself afterwards to those who watched by her bedside, she bade them seek some rest for themselves, adding, "For I am free from pain, and happy, and shall sleep;" and she slept the sleep of death.

CHAPTER VI.

The Merchant Service.

"The ship was cheered, the harbour cleared;
Merrily did we drop
Below the kirk, below the hill,
Below the lighthouse top."

—COLERIDGE.

THE MERCHANT SERVICE.

IN due time the desired opening appeared, and Charles March prepared to leave Suffolk to become the captain of a trading vessel. His Bungay friends urged him to remain amongst them, pointing out that he was leaving a sphere of usefulness, in which he had been wonderfully blessed; but he told them, with a characteristic decision that rendered further persuasion useless, that he was convinced it was his duty to go, and that "he had no more doubt of this than if God had sent an angel to point, and say, 'This is the way, walk thou in it.'"

On the 2d of February 1824, his friends presented him with a testimonial expressive of their appreciation of his disinterested labours, and commended him to God in prayer and in the apposite words of the twentieth Psalm,—"The Lord hear thee in the day of trouble; the name of the God of Jacob defend thee; send thee help from the sanctuary, and strengthen thee out of Zion; remember all thy offerings, and accept thy burnt sacrifice; grant thee according to thine own heart, and fulfil all thy counsel."

So he set out for Bristol, cheered by the assurance that those whom he left behind would ever encompass him with their sympathy, and remember him before a throne of grace. Arrived at his journey's end, he took the command of the *Ann and Mary*, which was chartered for the West Indies. The owners wished him to sail on Sunday, but he refused, declaring it unnecessary; and spending the day in the ancient city, he says of it,—"Heard three sermons at different places with a disturbed mind, but not without some profit." The following morning he dropped down to sea, and commenced the worship of God with the crew, three of whom he rejoiced to find had made a profession of faith in Christ. Heavy and contrary gales prevailing in the Channel, he was compelled to run into Falmouth, where he passed the Lord's-day visiting the Sunday schools of the place, and casting here and there the seed of eternal life.

His religion, which was at no time a mere Sabbatic suit, was associated with all the sights and circumstances of the voyage and was ever uppermost in his thoughts as he considered the welfare of his crew. Steering southward toward the region of the trade wind, Madeira, high and mist-covered, loomed on the horizon, reminding him of many a lofty mind and gifted spirit, between whom and the Sun of Righteousness the mists of earth-born doubt had crept. Discovering that his cabin boy was guilty of theft and lying, he prayed, ere he charged him with his

errors, that his heart might be softened to make a full acknowledgment. "On calling the boy," he says, "I found him in tears, when he confessed his fault. May God be praised for this answer to prayer, and may I be more earnest, and believe more in prayer for the future. Having admonished the boy, I dismissed him with prayer commending him to God." Thus the events of his daily life were "begun, continued, and ended" in God.

Arrived safely at St Vincent, where a cargo of sugar was to be shipped for England, his spare time was employed in inquiring into the spiritual condition of the negroes, and speaking to them of the glad tidings of salvation. Nor was he regardless of the white population. In an entry made on May 16th, we read: "This morning an overseer named Leach, who was very ill with the liver complaint, sent on board desiring to speak with me. Remembering the passage, 'Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might,' I immediately went on shore. A young man met me, saying it was too late, for the overseer had just breathed his last. I then inquired about his spiritual condition, and how he came to know me. The answer was, 'he had heard of me, and for the last two days had a great desire to see me. He was sensible to the last, still begging his friends to send for me.' However, I pray God to bless my interview with the young man. Having directed him to the 'wicket gate' I returned on board, feeling humbled

to recollect that the poor dying man had heard of me who honour God so little."

For these efforts Captain March was nicknamed "Wilberforce" by many of the English residents and captains, which leads him to say, "May I always follow Wilberforce as far as he followed Christ. I desire to honour God and speak good of His name more than ever I have done yet."

One day whilst the vessel was still lying at St Vincent, the cabin boy of whom we have spoken fell overboard, and being unable to swim, was sinking unperceived for the last time, when his drowning scream caught his master's ear. There was no time to divest himself of hat, coat, or watch. Plunging into the sea just as he was, the captain succeeded, by dint of great exertion, in saving him. "May God grant," he says in his journal, "that I may be the instrument of saving his soul as well as his life, which I most earnestly desire. Blessed be God for being able to swim!"

On May 15, the stowing of the cargo was completed, and as the last cask was hoisted on board a gun was fired and the crew raised a cheer, which, as is generally the case with British seamen, proved contagious, and was echoed back with responsive shouts from all the vessels in the bay. Says the diary, noticing this incident, "Oh that those shouts were the shouts of Zion for God's goodness and mercy to the children of men!"

The homeward voyage through alternate calm and storm, had one incident of melancholy interest. On the afternoon of June 17, as the *Ann and Mary* was speeding on her course under a clear sky and with a favouring breeze, a distant object rising and falling on the waves attracted attention. It was at length seen to be a dismasted brig, and the jolly boat being instantly lowered, Captain March proceeded towards it. The hapless hull proved to be that of the *Scotia* of St John's, laden with mahogany, and waterlogged; rudder, bowsprit, and cutwater were gone, and there was no living creature on board, but there were sad signs of the struggle for life which the unfortunate mariners had maintained. "Part of the foresail and the shear poles had been taken aft, and were lashed across the quarter to make a hurricane house, and pieces of bed, cot, hammock, and wearing apparel were strewn about: part of the chain cable was hanging overboard to lighten her, and two holes dug for getting things out of the cabin, one in the quarter-deck and another abreast of the mainmast." The shades of evening closed around the witnesses of these sorrowful tokens, as with solemn thoughts they pushed off from the wreck to return to their own snug vessel, and ere they retired to rest, the godly captain gathering his crew about him, spoke in a few earnest words of their dependence on God, and the gratitude they should feel to Him for His preserving mercy, as they thought of the almost certain fate of those, the traces

of whose sufferings they had just seen, and concluded by committing their way unto Him who can make the storm a calm. Whilst in Bristol, at the conclusion of his voyage, he received letters from the owners and under-writer of the *Scotia*, which confirmed his worst fears of the fate of her crew.

The green shores of the Emerald Isle soon appeared in sight, and then Lundy Isle, with all its suggestions of home and the early days passed amidst sweet scenery bordering the banks of the Taw, and then the vessel was moored in Kingroad.

On the 10th of the next month, Captain March was again working the *Ann and Mary* down the Channel, when, owing to the carelessness of the pilot, the ship struck the ground when "in stays," the ebb-tide leaving her immovable. As the flood-tide came up she began to strike heavily on the sands, and every blow that vibrated through the vessel seemed to the God-fearing captain a stroke of God's chastening hand, teaching him a lesson of dependence. "Through the goodness of God," he says, "at about two o'clock we were again upon the mighty waters."

He then steered for Newport, South Wales, where he was to receive a cargo of iron. Arriving on the evening of Saturday, he, contrary to his custom, but under the impression that he should be justified in so doing, had the vessel removed and her bottom surveyed on the following morning. Eleven days after, whilst sailing for Marseilles, he sent a letter by the

pilot to the owners of the vessel, in which his extreme tenderness of conscience, and earnest desire to keep holy the Sabbath, are evident, as the following extract will show:—

"I desire to make one more observation before I close this letter. You have heard me say that I considered it to be my duty to keep holy the Sabbath-day, and on it to do no unnecessary work. The good old way I departed from the Sunday after my arrival in Newport, by transporting the ship and getting her bottom surveyed on that day. This proved to be of no advantage, even in a temporal sense, for we took no cargo in until the Wednesday following, and a train of what the world calls 'ill-luck' has since followed me. On the contrary, whilst lying at Calliagna, St Vincent, I refused to discharge a 'droger' on the Sabbath-day, this being an exception to the other ships. Four of us got ready and sailed for England the same week, and I, who appeared to stand alone for God, was the first to arrive by several days, although I believe the dullest sailer. I do not give you this as a settled plan of God's dealings, for we know He sometimes suffers the wicked to flourish as a green bay tree; but this I know, I have found great peace in keeping the commandments of God, and wretchedness when I depart from them."

Once more Captain March commenced daily worship with his crew, sometimes on the Sabbath reading

a short sermon, and sometimes making a few remarks of his own. Whilst thus anxious for their souls' health, he little knew how soon one of his audience would be hurried by sudden and violent death into the presence of his Maker. Under the date of Wednesday, July 28, is the following entry:—"This day hath been attended with some trials, carrying away the fore-top-gallant-mast and main-boom. Oh how soon could God strip us of all our masts and sails! I desire to feel more dependence upon Him, that I may feel more trust in Him. The day closed with dark, gloomy weather and flashes of lightning, which too much resembles my poor soul." The next day he was busily at work with his men repairing the damage, finding much pleasure in the exercise of his carpentering skill, and full of religious reflection. "I am reminded," he says, "of a poor fellow I visited when on shore, who for thirteen weeks was confined to his bed with a broken thigh, and gave no more signs of repentance than this main-boom."

And now swiftly and pleasantly the good ship glided on through the Straits of Gibraltar, its captain not bound, as once he was when passing the same shores, on a mission of war and destruction, but on an errand of peaceful commerce. Sunday the 8th did not prove a day of rest. Says the journal of that date: "God hath visited us with sore judgment, yet hath mercy been mixed with it." Whilst in sight of the land, and in a comparatively calm sea, a violent

storm arose, and the top-mast was carried away whilst some seamen were aloft sending down the royal-yard and mast. Thomas Jones and Thomas Buck fell overboard, the former, being dashed against the sides of the ship, sank to rise no more. The latter striking out vigorously succeeded in keeping himself afloat, till, amidst peril and excitement, the jolly-boat reached him and he was rescued. Brief is this record of a scene of danger and death, more brief was the spectacle itself. The sudden rush of wind, the crashing of the mast, the plunge beneath the water of him who was hidden for ever from view, the battling with the waves of the strong swimmer, the lowering of the boat, the bringing the exhausted man up the side of ship, being the work of but a few minutes. The storm that had come so suddenly was long in departing, and continued its work of destruction on the almost helpless vessel. Says the journal: "We are now almost reduced to a wreck; O God, let Thine arm be stretched out to save us, and grant that Thy Holy Spirit may be poured down upon us, that the death of our poor shipmate may be the spiritual life of all on board! Oh let such a solemn mysterious event prove a warning and the best of blessings to us all! The wind has risen to a gale, but thank God for sea room and a tight ship."

"*Monday, 9th.*—The gale increases, and God threatens to sweep long-boat and everything overboard. O Lord, Thy waves and Thy billows are

going over me. Cast me not away in Thine anger, neither chasten me in Thy hot displeasure. I richly deserve all Thou hast laid upon me, but my hope is still in Thy mercy, through Thy well-beloved Son, Jesus Christ my Redeemer." On the Wednesday, the storm having abated, he commenced making a new fore-top-mast, which with the help of the men was finished before sunset; and with that piety which was so beautifully blended with his every act, he says, "Praise God from whom all blessings flow; for we have been enabled to finish our fore-top-mast, and once more set the sail." After these occurrences Captain March discovered that Thomas Jones was the son of a clergyman named P—— who resided at Worcester. For some reason or another his father turned him away at an early age, and under an assumed name he became a common seaman. "What mercy," says the good captain, "that God does not cast out all His children when they misbehave." The seaman who was saved from a watery grave was but little impressed with his merciful escape, and, to his master's great grief, died not long afterwards from disease engendered by vicious courses.

A few days more and the ship was moored safely in the snug harbour of Marseilles. Receiving an invitation to dine out on the Sabbath, Captain March, according to a rule he had laid down for himself, declined, not because he thought the act would be sinful in itself, but because, except he was with those

who were similarly disposed, he found it almost impossible to stem the current of purely secular conversation that drew his thoughts away from those themes of contemplation to which he was wont to consecrate the day: so he remained reading on board his vessel. During the day he entered a Catholic chapel. "I endeavoured," he said, "to join their worship by singing some English hymns to their tunes. The minister preached extempore, his manner was energetic as if he was preaching the gospel." Thus free from the bigotry that would deny the possibility of devoutness, sincerity, or salvation to a Roman Catholic, he sought to extract such good as might be found in their corrupt religion.

A portion of the cargo of iron discharged, he set sail for Naples, to which port the remainder of the freight was consigned. Passing by Corsica and Elba, which set him musing on the mystery of Providence as seen in the life and history of Napoleon, he entered for the first time into that beautiful bay behind which Vesuvius rears its dark and ominous head. Whilst tarrying here, the profanation of the Sabbath and the foolish pomp of the churches much grieved him, and drove him to the seclusion of his own cabin, where, poring over the volumes of saintly English authors, he longed to be transported into the midst of a congregation where God was worshipped in spirit and in truth. Vesuvius was climbed, and its smoking summit excited awe. "I was amazed," he wrote, "to

feel the heat of a fire which God had kept burning for so many hundreds of years, by which He had destroyed cities, towns, and plantations." He also visited Herculaneum and Pompeii, with all their wonderful relics; and standing amongst those scenes of domestic life and public activity, which since the year 79 had been covered with a preserving layer of ashes, two things especially struck his mind,—the signs of the depravity that countenanced gross immorality, made pleasure the chief object of life, and substituted superstition for the worship of the one true God; and the tokens of an over-ruling Providence which had apparently in indignation buried the corrupt city, blotting it for a time from the face of the earth, and allowing its exhumation in these latter days that we might learn its touching and lamentable lessons.

The remainder of the iron discharged, the vessel was chartered to load sulphur at Licata (Sicily) for Glasgow; and so he set sail from that place of strange commingling of life and death, where the blue waves toss beneath the mount of destruction, the grapes grow luscious on the ashes of the volcano, and the voices and steps of curious visitors resound amongst the streets and houses of a long perished people.

Genial as was his nature and firm his faith, Captain March's life was not all sunshine, as we might have been inclined to think but for this daily jotting of experience. Voyaging to Licata he has a sad Sunday, on which he writes: "Felt much concern and

anxiety about our intended voyage. I think this is mine infirmity. O God, forgive me that I have so much anxiety about the future; help me to cast my care upon Thee. Read some of Matthew Henry's 'Pleasantness of Religion,' which convinced me that I live very far beneath my privileges. Ended the day with darkness of mind and dejection of spirits. 'Lord save, or I perish.'"

Robust, too, as was his constitution, he was occasionally reminded of his mortality; and having at this time been somewhat seriously indisposed for several days, he says, "I hope the Lord will prepare me for His blessed will concerning me. Having no earthly physician to consult, may my faith in God increase; and now, my heart and flesh beginning to fail, may He be the strength of my heart and my portion for ever." During these trials there came a great thunder-storm, which seemed to have the same cheering effect that a somewhat similar manifestation of God's power in the elements had for Elijah of old. Whilst, as it raged with fury, many of the seamen cowered and sought for shelter in their superstitious dread, their captain stood erect amidst it all, hearing in each peal the voice of his Father.

Anchoring off Licata, the sulphur was brought out in boats, but for some days a fierce gale threatening the destruction of the ship interfered with the work. Here Captain March visited a Capuchin monastery. "The friar was very polite and civil, which I soon

discovered arose from mercenary motives. Their flattery was very fulsome: they said that they loved English captains, and during the late gale were looking out for my ship and praying for my safety." During his brief visits on shore he managed to sell nineteen Testaments, and thus sought the blessing promised to those who sow beside all waters.

The homeward voyage was quickly made. Beating along shore from Cape de Gata to Gibraltar, the sombre mountains with snow-clad summits brought to mind the prophet's comforting assurance, that man's sins dark as crimson may be made "white as snow," covered by a Saviour's spotless righteousness.

One afternoon was spent in catching turtle, the largest of which weighed sixty pounds. "Thus God not only feeds me with bread and water, but grants me some of the luxuries of life." The next day, passing a Dutch galliot, and desirous that others should share in his good cheer, he sent a boat to her captain with a turtle, who acknowledged the kindness by a present in return. So with these mutual courtesies they passed on to their different havens. Arrived at Greenock, Captain March learned of the wreck, with the loss of all hands, of a vessel that had loaded and discharged at the same ports with himself, and thus felt especial cause for gratitude in the recollection of his prosperous voyage. Here, too, he was informed by the owner of the *Ann and Mary* that the Bristol house that had chartered her to St Vincent

would do so no more, owing to the prejudice of their attorney against Captain March for his zeal for Sabbath observance. "At first I was rather disconcerted to think that my religion should hinder the owner's prosperity; but believing that God would make up all such losses to them, I felt composed, and hope I shall always be enabled to honour Him. O God! if I am not prospered with success, may it never prejudice the minds of my employers against Thy blessed gospel—may it by no means be a stumbling-block!"

From Greenock he proceeded towards Liverpool in quest of freight, and during the passage a storm drove him into Lamlash harbour, Isle of Arran. Going ashore, he conversed with some of the inhabitants of the little town on matters of religion, and was pleased with their knowledge of Scripture, hoping that it was not only written on their memories, but also engraven on their hearts. He further says of them,—"I admire their universal plan of parents teaching their children to read, and, of course, to write. A poor woman told me it was her husband's habit to instruct their children every evening, whilst he was working at his bench as a carpenter, and she thought it as necessary to educate as to feed them." Before he left the island he distributed a number of tracts through various houses, and commissioned a little girl to change them at regular intervals: and so, having set on foot this humble but useful organisation, and

sought to make the best use of the providence that had driven him into Lamlash, he set sail for Liverpool. Here he had a time of much refreshment listening to the preaching of the Rev. Dr Raffles, and consorting with godly friends, amongst whom was a pious captain, the first he had met since his connection with the merchant service. As he heard this good man's recital of God's mercy towards him in the midst of anxieties and peril, he was much cheered, and his faith was strengthened. Nor was such consolation unneeded, for in his advocacy of the truth he was often met by the scoffer's chief argument—derisive laughter. He soon after fell in with another Christian captain,—"Who," he writes, "greatly encouraged me to continue the worship of God on board, affirming that he had done so, and would on no account give it up. Oh for more grace, that I may know and perform my duty!"

On receiving information that the vessel was chartered for Belfast and Rio Janeiro, he prays, "O God, I desire most solemnly to commit the crew, passengers, and property into Thy hands. Grant me ability to speak good of Thy name, and to recommend the gospel to those who may be with me, and may their hearts be opened to receive it; when all the glory shall be ascribed to Thee through Jesus Christ. Amen."

On Monday, February 7, 1825, he sought to "haul out of dock," but the entrance was so thronged

with shipping that he was compelled to wait till next day. But his evening was not wasted. He attended a missionary prayer-meeting; after which, impelled by the urgings of conscience, he distributed tracts amongst those unhappy women, who, in almost every port, are seen at night hovering at the corners of the streets watching for their prey. He found time also to lay in a stock of Portuguese tracts, and then, leaving behind the forest of masts that line the banks of the Mersey, and threading his way through the shipping on the river, he entered on his new voyage. As evening fell on the encircling sea, he reverently worshipped God with his fresh crew.

Occasionally our versatile seaman had work of a surgical character to perform, which he accomplished with the promptitude and self-possession that seemed never to forsake him. Under date of Tuesday, February 15, we read,—"Commenced discharging into a lighter, when James Hatton was struck with the handle of the winch, and had the scalp of the fore part of his head cut about five or six inches, forming a crescent. Having shaved the head and dressed it, I now look to Thee, O God, for Thy blessing to heal, praying that I may be able to speak a word in season to this orphan."

Continuing with regularity the worship of God with his own crew, Captain March often induced others who had been engaged on the ship to join their devotions. For instance, one evening,

while lying off Belfast, some lightermen, an exciseman, and a custom-house officer, ere they left the vessel, tarried to share in the service. Words of gratitude from the godly, and occasionally expressions of a spiritual desire from the lips of those who had been habitually careless, were his reward for thus seeking the welfare of all with whom he came in contact.

Having completed a general cargo for Rio, the *Ann and Mary* sailed from Belfast on March 15. Baffling winds for many days hindered her course, and then came a favouring breeze, which after a while rose to a furious blast, so that the mercy became a peril.

"*Friday, 25th.*—While at tea this evening a tremendous sea struck the stern of the ship in such a manner as I never recollect to have experienced. The stroke was so violent that it felt as if her whole stern-frame had fallen upon a rock. At the time I laughed it off with a heathenish sort of triumph and contempt, so that the others might not be alarmed. This I did from the motions of a wicked heart. About two hours afterwards I was led to examine the stern-post, (which is some feet under water,) and found that the upper part of it had started out above an inch, and it was leaking all round. Having secured it with extra lashings I retired, and reflected upon the mercy of God, feeling some penitence for my past evil conduct. May the Lord continue to have mercy upon me, and never suffer me again to mock or laugh at His judgments. It has since appeared to me that, had a

second sea struck the ship in like manner, she would in all probability have sunk like lead in the mighty waters. When I saw there was danger and some cause for alarm, I was justly visited with darkness of soul, and appeared to have no refuge to which I could flee."

Supremely anxious to instruct, Captain March sought at daily worship to expound the Scripture, concerning which he remarks:

"*April* 9.—Finished reading the 11th chapter of John, which I have attempted to explain to the crew. O God, forgive what I have said amiss, and bless what has been agreeable to Thy word! Grant that my sinful unworthiness may not hinder the salvation of my shipmates, which I beg for Jesus' sake."

Whilst caring for the souls of the crew, he hesitated not to speak personally and faithfully to the passengers.

"*Monday, 11th.*—Conversed with Mr B—— on the best of things. He laughed at the idea of his becoming 'a saint.' 'What would his friends say when he returned again to Belfast?' Notwithstanding he was evidently affected. I pray that his coming on board this vessel may be for the better, and not for the worse. May God make him a saint indeed, and grant me continual supplies of wisdom profitable to direct." But those for whom he was so solicitous proved sometimes inimical to his own spiritual progress. "I find," he says, "the continual din of ——'s carnal

conversation on the Sabbath like a clog to my soul. It would be almost insulting not to answer him. Lord, teach me how to act and what to say." The sailors seemed better disposed; and on the Lord's-day, as the vessel was being wafted on its course, they would occupy themselves, seated on various parts of the deck, with the perusal of religious books.

Amidst the calms and heat of tropical regions, the vessel making little way on a smooth sea, some of the tenants of the deep became objects of interest and instruction.

"*Monday, May 2.*—This day I have succeeded in taking two sharks; the first about three, and the second about four feet long. The pilot fish, ten or twelve in number, were swimming close to them. How wonderful that these sharks, which appear to have been very hungry, would not touch one of the pilot-fish, and that they should know their protectors. When a shark was taken the pilot-fish were in great consternation, darting first one way, then another, but still continuing to remain under the ship." They reminded Captain March of those disciples, who, when their Master was taken, were less faithful and fled. The next day another shark of apparently malicious temperament visited them. "It appeared to have no appetite to eat, but an extraordinary propensity for destruction. Two dead fish floated past, which we suppose it had killed. Three of the crew went overboard several times to see if it would

attack them when it darted forward for that purpose. Finding itself deceived by the men getting on board too soon it kept out of sight under the bottom, as if to draw them away from the ship. One of the men bolder than the rest again ventured overboard, when the shark came from under the bottom and made straight up for him. This was repeated by the man and the shark. Fearing that the latter would get too cunning for the former, I desired the crew to keep on board and not trifle with their lives any longer. What a mystery that the wise and blessed God should suffer such monsters to exist, but it is less mysterious than the existence of sin. 'Oh the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!'"

Fishing for mere sport Captain March could not tolerate, but his views on catching a shark, and that too on the Sabbath, are thus expressed:

"*Sunday, 8th.*—I was this day appealed to for a bait to endeavour to catch a shark. Being in a strait I at last consented, considering it an act of charity to destroy such monsters whenever they came in my way, on the same principle that I would destroy a rat, viper, or rattlesnake. It also appeared to me that there might not be another opportunity of destroying this creature, and perhaps the next time any of us bathed it would take our lives. I should be glad to consult some pious, judicious person on the subject, as I feel

quite open to conviction, and desire to be set right if I am wrong."

On May 29, a fair Sabbath, the vessel cast anchor in the beautiful harbour of Rio, and the eyes of the voyagers were satisfied and refreshed as they gazed on the green hills and rocky peaks that formed a magnificent background to the blue waters. Captain March's susceptibility of soul and thorough conscientiousness expressed themselves in the remarks recorded on this day. "God in His wisdom has thought fit to bring us into port. I should have preferred another than the Sabbath-day, as many profitable thoughts have been necessarily excluded from my mind, and I have been deluged with worldly cares. As God permits me to arrive on the Sabbath, would it be unlawful for me to sail on it? O Lord, grant me that wisdom that shall direct me into the path of duty." On leaving Rio Janeiro, Sunday, September 4, he wrote: "After much hesitation and thought as to the propriety of my sailing this day, I at length concluded, as we were all ready and should be outside by 8 A.M., to proceed. But the forenoon has been occupied in lashing and securing various articles to prepare for blowing weather, which came on before night with the wind directly against us. So far we have gained nothing by sailing on a Sunday, as we are now (8 P.M.) driven to leeward of Rio. I need some one to guide me."

The same characteristics are seen in his firm oppo-

sition to anything approaching dishonesty and deception in those around him. "Mr ——, a passenger, has been wanting me to conceal some property not in the manifest and liable to duty. Of course I refused, which appeared to occasion some offence. I observed that, as I did not defraud on the owner's account, I could not be expected to do it for a stranger."

A considerable portion of the cargo was found to be injured, owing to the mode of stowing directed by the consignee; and the matter being made the subject of litigation, Captain March was urged to say that it was caused by salt water, so that the damages, laid at £3000, might fall on the underwriters and not on the ship or charterer. He replied, "He would not belie his conscience for all Rio."

The horrors of the slave trade were very manifest to him whilst tarrying at this port. He saw the landing of whole cargoes of negroes, most of them young people. They were made to clap their hands and sing in chorus that they might seem cheerful, "but alas!" he says, "their voices appeared to ascend from broken hearts. If any of them stopped for a moment they received a lash from an overseer." He saw them sold by auction, and watched their anxious countenances as they scanned the faces of those who joined in the bidding, endeavouring to glean from their features some idea of the future they might expect. One day he visited the slave-market, and went into a

room where there were about a hundred children getting their food. "A boy six or seven years of age was sold and taken away by his new master. The seller turned him about at the door, and desired him to wave his hand to his playfellows, (some of whom, perhaps, were his brothers and sisters,) and bid them good-bye, but the poor little fellow's lips began to quiver, and he left the room without a movement, not even raising his eyes from the ground."

He also took opportunities of speaking with these unhappy creatures so as to learn something of their history and feelings:—"Had some conversation with a slave about seventeen years of age, who was the property of an English merchant, when he informed me that he was taken by white people (Portuguese) while standing in the street not far from his parents' house, and when he was about eight years of age. He was exceedingly frightened, and thought the white people were going to eat him. Occasionally he had seen some of his acquaintances brought over from the coast for sale, but none of his relations."

The subjoined entry shows how slavery aided in brutalizing both the priests and people of Rio:—

"*August* 16.—On my way to the merchant's I saw three men, negroes, hung for murdering their master. The gallows resembled a door frame, with a pair of steps leading to the top piece. The criminals, dressed in white gowns with the ropes around their necks and coiled about their waists, walked through the streets to the place of execution, surrounded by a gang of

priests. The men were then seated on stools with their backs to the gallows, each holding a small crucifix. One man was hanged and cut down before another was brought forward. Each ascended the steps with a priest and the two hangmen, who were convicts. After the rope was made fast to the top piece, and the hands and feet of the condemned man secured, the priest began to pray, in the midst of which one of the hangmen pushed the criminal from the steps, the other hangman jumping off with him, holding by the rope and sitting on his shoulders. His weight broke the neck immediately, the sound of which I could distinctly hear. When the body had hung some minutes the hangman let himself down, his comrade immediately severing the rope, and the body was laid under the steps. During the execution the priests seemed to make good cheer with some bread and wine, of which they had a supply in a large basket. The horrid spectacle ended, they assembled round the bodies and chanted, after which the corpses were removed in hammocks. I thought the slaves appeared to suffer death with little concern, labouring apparently under great ignorance. I endeavoured, while their lives were spared, to pray that Christ would reveal Himself to them as their only Saviour."

By request of Mr M'Kay, a Christian merchant in Rio, who was always bent on doing good, Captain March visited the Seaman's Hospital, conversing with the afflicted inmates, and on several Sundays conduct-

ing a service, when he read a sermon interspersed with his own remarks. "I always," he says, "found that without this, little attention is paid to the sermon itself. God knows whether I assume too much, but I find that by this plan my own soul is more alive to the truths of the discourse, and that consequently the hearers attend with greater interest." On Sabbath days the Bethel flag floated from the mast-head of the *Ann and Mary*, sometimes Mr M'Kay, sometimes Captain March undertaking the service. Previous to the hour of assembling, the latter would send round a boat to the different English vessels in port, to invite attendance. Sometimes he met with rudeness and rebuff, but usually with courtesy if not compliance. Going the round one Lord's-day morning, a sailor replied that he hoped to be in the grog-shop by eleven o'clock. "What an evidence," says the zealous captain, "that such a man must be converted before he can be happy in heaven or enjoy the Sabbath of the skies." Careful at the same time was he of his own spiritual life, devoting such time as he could command to devotional reading, and even in this he felt the need of the divine blessing ere profit could be obtained. "I have enjoyed," he says, "the reading of Mr Jay's volume of sermons, and have been again struck with the necessity of dependence upon God, for those sermons from which I expected most good have left no impression upon my mind."

Ready for reloading, Captain March could not

at first obtain a freight. This was a peculiar trial to him for two reasons. First, because not having a share in the ship, he felt the more desirous to avoid a loss that would fall entirely on its owners; and secondly, because it was commonly said in Rio among the godless, that "all vessels that hoisted the Bethel flag went away in ballast." So for the honour of God's name, and that His religion might not seem to the world to be necessarily associated with ill-luck, he prayed for a cargo, and it was not long in forthcoming.

On Saturday the 3rd he "warped out of harbour," having bidden farewell to his Christian friend Mr M'Kay, leaving him, as he expresses it, "amidst a furnace of temptation and evil," in the hope that he would come out of it at length without even the scent of fire upon him.

On the return voyage, Captain March was if anything more sedulous for the spiritual welfare of the crew than when sailing for Rio, knowing that in all probability it would be his last opportunity of speaking with most of them; for, as is usual with ordinary trading ships on arriving at home, the sailors were paid off immediately and shipped themselves in another vessel ready to sail, that work and therefore wage might be continued without intermission. He was of opinion that the reading or preaching of sermons was no essential part of the worship of God, and so would sometimes on the Lord's-day give them extracts from

works of Christian biography. One Sabbath evening he urged on the men with peculiar earnestness to remember, that if from the reading of God's word and the consideration of divine truth they gained no good, they must reap injury—if it proved not a savour of life unto life, it would be a savour of death unto death. He begged of them to search their hearts, and to see whether it was an easier or more difficult thing for them to sin than when first they shipped with him.

Whilst near the equator, the sky being overcast and the sea troubled, his awe at the divine power was quickened as he saw a waterspout, its dark base curling with fearful rapidity, its white stem of foaming water rearing on high and then spreading out as into a dense cloud. This strange aqueous tree, with twisted roots curling amongst the sea waves, with gleaming trunk and wide black branches, caused him to exclaim, "They that go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters; these see the works of the Lord, and his wonders in the deep." A different scene, awakening different emotions, was spread before him on the evening of Tuesday, October 18th. Standing at the helm he observed the clouds assume the form of some mighty cathedral, whose base, resting on the horizon, was washed by the sparkling ocean, and whose snowy columns, pinnacles, and domes towered aloft in the vault of heaven. "I then thought," he says, "how beautiful the temple of God

must be, and with tears of joy I felt some desire to be there." Then he charitably observes that he does not wonder at the desire of the Roman Catholics to excite their devotion by forms of material beauty.

At length the Channel was reached, along which a furious gale, that wrecked an East Indiaman on the Goodwin Sands with the loss of all hands, drove him along; but in safety the *Ann and Mary* reached an anchorage at Blackwall. Whilst that evening at worship a squall came on, causing the ship to run out the chain cable, which soon brought all hands on deck. Having secured the vessel they again assembled to conclude their service, Captain March remarking on the connection between praying and working, and showing how there was a proper time for each; and so the voyage was closed with prayer and praise and the word of exhortation.

"*Saturday, November* 12.—Discharged the crew with wages, tracts, and advice. Some of them I observed to go with a heavy heart, and some of them could not help letting fall a tear."

The next day found him with his friends in Poultry Chapel, listening to the preaching of the Rev. J. Clayton. "I was," he says, "not a little refreshed after my fasting for eight months."

On December 3rd, Captain March proceeded down the Thames, the vessel being in ballast and bound to Alicante for a cargo of barilla. It may be here stated, for the information of those not acquainted

with the fact, that barilla is a grass sown largely in Spain when, owing to dry weather, the crop of corn fails. From the ash of this grass a mineral alkali, an impure carbonate of soda, is obtained, which is used in bleaching.

Our godly seaman was glad once more to find himself on the ocean, "for," he says, "he does not on shore, and in the excitement of much society, find such peace and tranquillity to his soul as when traversing the sea, which God holdeth in the hollow of His hand." Spiritual work was at once commenced.

"*Sunday, December* 11.—My Sunday school consists of two boys, who can read tolerably well. One of them I have sought to improve by telling him to explain a verse of Scripture, or describe a given subject. I pray that this method may be blessed of God." Whilst seeking to convoy souls to heaven, he was not indifferent to the sailing qualities of his own material craft; and on the 14th he notes: "Yesterday we passed the *Rebecca*, Yarmouth brig, by our superior sailing, which I consider not a small comfort."

Arrived at Alicante he took all the opportunities afforded him of visiting the interior, and was much pleased with the scenery as he traversed the fertile valleys which intersect the bold and barren hills. "We passed through a village called Holy Face, where there is a black cloth in the form of a man's face—which is kept by the priests, and which is said to have been thrown over the face of our Saviour

when expiring on the cross; his agonising perspiration having turned it black. During a time of great drought, and as soon as there is some indication of a change of weather, this cloth is carried in grand procession to Alicante, when prayer is offered up for rain, which usually follows."

Although liable to a heavy penalty, Captain March felt he ought to obey God rather than man, and so quietly proceeded with the distribution of tracts, nothing discouraged by the fact that a Bible, Testament, and pamphlets which he had put into the hands of the vice-consul's son were seized and burned.

Associated with such Roman Catholic bigotry, he noticed a strange deadness of moral sense, which led to extraordinary modes of procuring money for charitable purposes.

"*Sunday, January* 1.—The clerk informed me that there was to be a cock-fight this afternoon, the profits of which would be appropriated to the hospital."

From Alicante Captain March proceeded to Carthagena to complete his cargo. Whilst lying here, much to his surprise, three respectable men came to purchase each a Bible. Doubtful though he was concerning their motives, and not knowing whether they had any connection with the Inquisition, he at once complied with their request, and had reason afterwards to believe that they were really truth-seekers.

"*Monday, January* 23.—Spent the afternoon on shore getting water, collecting insects, and dropping

tracts, which I commend to the protection of Him who alone can direct and bless them."

Whilst at this port, many of the crew who had previously made a decent show of respecting the means of grace, manifested their natural hostility to religion by giving way to swearing and expressions of contempt for divine worship. A circumstance occurred which served to rebuke their godlessness, and was welcomed by Captain March as a token of his Master's approbation.

"The crew of the *Trusty* brig this evening requested me to give them some tracts, and asked permission to attend divine service. I received this as a voice from heaven, bidding me not to be weary in well-doing. If my own crew was not touched by the service, I trust the others were. Blessed be God for all His mercies; I hope now to take fresh courage.

"*Thursday, January* 26.—Completed the cargo, and got rid of all the Spanish Bibles and Testaments; the former went off briskly, but the latter at first hung on hand.

"*Friday, 27th.*—Having settled all accounts on shore, proceeded at 2 P.M. to get the ship out of port, it blowing strong from the eastward, which is fair outside. Received some kindly assistance in getting out from the captain of the *Trusty*, and his crew. May the Lord reward them for their kindness, and bless to them the tracts which they thankfully received."

It was in spite of the superstitious reluctance of

the sailors that he left on this day of the week, the common saying being,

> "Sunday's sail will never fail,
> But Friday's sail is sure to fail."

This couplet he sought to controvert in both its maxims.

After a speedy voyage he arrived once more off Lundy Isle. Here a pilot was secured. "I thought," he writes, "when he came on board my cares would cease; but how disappointed was I when this evening I found him intoxicated, and the ship close to a dangerous shoal. This was a salutary lesson not to trust in a pilot again, but in the living God, which I soon had grace to do, and was comforted accordingly. Through God's mercy, and the help of a good chart, the ship has been preserved, and at midnight we lay between the Holmes, waiting for the flood-tide."

It was arranged that the next voyage of the *Ann and Mary* should be to Demerara; and whilst at Bristol making preparations for sailing, and in view of the temptations then surrounding him, and those with which he would ever have to cope in the prosecution of his calling, he wrote in his journal: "I desire to lay down my life rather than to lay down my religion; and as Satan can more easily blot such a resolution out of my heart than out of this book, I hope that this entry will, under God's blessing, continually remind me of my purpose. May I ever be enabled so to manage my business, as to honour God

and promote my own and others' real good. May I never indulge in any secret sin, but live up to the professed principles of my religion, so that my life may be a constant sermon, and put to silence the ignorance of foolish men. With regard to my efforts to do good, this I take as a certain rule, that whatever act of mine is likely to provoke, harden, and enrage the hearts of men, rather than to convince and convert, is a fruit of indiscretion, not of Christian prudence—a piece of folly, and not a part of my duty. And let me remember that the best time to tell a man of his faults is when I can commend him for his virtues. Though I am not bound always to proclaim my faith and my religion, yet I am engaged never to disown them. May I live in the constant exercise of those acts of true religion which are beautiful in the eyes of all, even the worst of men."

During the interval before sailing, such time as could be spared from business was spent in the endeavour to do and gain good. His long spiritual fasts made him hunger after food for the soul, and led him to many religious assemblies; and now at a meeting of the London Missionary Society, hearing the report of one of the agents from the Sandwich Islands; now in a group of sailors joining in the devotions that were led by Admiral Pearson; now at a Quakers' meeting, listening to the exhortations of Mr Gurney of Norwich; and now at a gathering of the supporters of the Church Missionary Society, drink-

ing in the words of a Bickersteth, he sought to lay in a cargo of divine truth for his next voyage.

On the 26th of May, after a passage marked by several interesting incidents, of which there is not space to speak in this little volume, Captain March brought his vessel safely into Demerara harbour. The religious condition of the colony absorbed much of his attention, and he worshipped by turns in the different sanctuaries that were within reach. On June 4th, a day of pouring rain, he was much struck with the sincerity of the negro Christians assembling in a congregational chapel, who came in spite of the unfavourable weather, from distances of six, twelve, and even twenty miles. After the ordinary service, the ordinance of the Lord's Supper was observed, and out of the one hundred and twenty members on the church roll, only three or four were absent. This act of devotion being concluded, the negroes, considering the rain, which had not hindered their coming, to be much too severe to allow of their departure, tarried for singing and prayer; and at the minister's request, Captain March led their devotions. Returning on board his vessel after this season of spiritual refreshing, he must have shared the feelings of the disciples, who, when they came down from the Mount of Transfiguration, beheld the sad spectacle of a lad convulsed by the strivings of an evil spirit; for he found some of the crew, whom he had permitted to go on shore to attend Divine worship, under

the debasing influence of the demon drink, and amongst them an orphan boy of whom he had hoped better things. This was peculiarly distressing to him, for he had prayerfully endeavoured to guide this youth in the way of holiness. As the best way of removing the immediate effects of the boy's debauch, he lashed him on deck, with his arms out, and his face to the wind.

Finding thus that some of his crew were not disposed to go to the gospel, Captain March determined to bring the gospel to them, and next Sunday, having an awning spread over the deck, he secured the services of a missionary, who preached an excellent discourse from the words, "This day is salvation come to this house." This, he was informed, was the first sermon ever preached in the river Demerara. An attempt was made to interrupt it by a party of scoffers in an open boat, but they soon desisted.

Whilst detesting slavery, he did not feel it his duty to excite those who were in bondage to discontent, but endeavoured to point out the alleviations of their position. Being present at a gathering of a negro church, he told them how much better off they were in a temporal sense than many of the poor in England. Having mentioned some facts in support of this assertion, "I told them it was not being free alone that would make them happy, but the love and friendship of God."

Captain March was ever observant of illustrations

of Scripture, as the two following instances will show:—

"*Tuesday, June* 13, 1826.—I learned from Mr R., who superintends the felling and cutting of wood, that in these regions the sap of trees ascends when the moon increases, and descends when she wanes. Here it is clear that this is one of the 'precious things put forth by the moon,' (Deut. xxxiii. 14.) For if timber be felled while the sap is in it, it soon decays and becomes useless, which would be always the case at Demerara, where 'everlasting spring abides,' and the season never changes, but for the special provision God has made. Here we see the divine wisdom and goodness, causing the 'sun and moon and all cedars to praise him.'"

A few days later he took an excursion in the jolly-boat some forty miles up the river Demerara, to the region of the sandhills—the highest which he saw being eighty feet from base to summit, a remarkable elevation in that level district. Two successive nights were spent in the boat, which was anchored in the middle of the river. As darkness fell on the scene, shrouding from view the adjacent banks, a perfect clamour arose in the dense woods on either hand from the birds, beasts, and insects that were preying on each other. "I heard from the nearest part of the shore," he says, "something seize on a large bird that was roosting on a tree, whose cries and moans of distress continued for many minutes,

and then became weaker and weaker as life appeared to depart." So the sounds continued till morning broke on the placid current, the anchored boat, and the tangled forests. Then they were hushed, and the voices of the negroes were heard as they went to their toil. "This," he remarks, "I consider to be a beautiful illustration of a portion of the 104th Psalm: 'Thou makest darkness, and it is night: wherein all the beasts of the forest do creep forth. The young lions roar after their prey, and seek their meat from God. The sun ariseth, they gather themselves together, and lay them down in their dens. Man goeth forth unto his work and to his labour until the evening. O Lord, how manifold are thy works! In wisdom hast thou made them all: the earth is full of thy riches.'

"*Wednesday, July* 12.—I made all sail for old England. Being once more launched into the mighty waters, I again commit all to Him who alone is able to bring us to our desired haven.

"*Wednesday*, 19*th*.—This forenoon, whilst working on deck with my tools, I discovered the cook-house all in a blaze, and instantly commenced knocking it to pieces, and calling out for water, and through God's great mercy the flames were extinguished. The mate appeared to be much alarmed, and I heard his voice crying in a piteous tone, 'O my God!' I wish he may learn from henceforth to pray in earnest. If the fire had continued two minutes longer the

mainsail would have caught, and then I fear the ship would have been destroyed, and perhaps our lives. My soul has profited by our peril and deliverance. I never seem to thrive so well as when under the exercise of some trial. 'Oh for a closer walk with God' during favourable circumstances. What a state to be in, to forsake God when He smiles upon us.

"*Monday, September* 4. — Employed in tacking along the coast of Cornwall and Devonshire. Most of the night was spent in Barnstaple Bay, only a few miles from the spot where I first breathed the breath of life. Little do my friends imagine that I am so near to them." The next day he anchored a tide between Linton and Ilfracombe, and there, in sight of that sweet scenery, the vessel rising and falling on the gentle undulation of the scarce-rippled sea,

> "He like a lover, down through all his blood
> Drew in the dewy, meadowy, morning breath
> Of England, blown across her ghostly wall."

CHAPTER VII.

To and Fro.

"They that go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters; these see the works of the Lord and his wonders in the deep."—Ps. cvii. 23, 24.

"A white sail gleaming on the flood,
And the bright orbed sun on high,
Are all that break the solitude
Of the circling sea and sky;
Nor cloud nor cape is imaged there,
Nor isle of ocean, nor of air.

"Led by the magnet o'er the tides,
That bark her path explores;
Sure as unerring instinct guides
The birds to unseen shores;
With wings that o'er the waves expand,
She wanders to a viewless land.

"Yet not alone;—for hopes and fears
Go with her wandering sail;
And bright eyes watch, through gathering tears,
The distant cloud to hail;
And prayers for her, at midnight lone,
Ascend unheard, by all save One!

"And not alone;—for round her glow
The vital light and air,
And something that in whispers low
Tells to man's spirit there,
Upon her waste and weary road,
A present all-pervading God."

—MALCOLM.

TO AND FRO.

IT is not often that we find men enamoured of their calling. More usually they dwell on its disadvantages, and look enviously on the vocations of their fellows. Very common is this with those who "do business in great waters." Frequently has the writer heard such exclaim with emphasis that nothing but necessity bound them to their roving life, for the early novelty of their seafaring occupation has passed away, and romantic hues no longer tinge the stern facts of life.

To the youth on shore the departure and return of a vessel is always a cheerful sight. To a merry tune the sailors turn the capstan as the anchor is dragged up from its deep resting-place, and with bright countenances they leap on shore, when at length the laden vessel returns to the harbour. But the long intervening voyage, with its hazards and privations, danger now looming from the belt of surf that whitens the lee-shore, weariness now falling on all whilst becalmed for tedious days on the unvarying circle of waters: all this is unthought of by the uninitiated lad. He sees the seaman as he passes gaily down

the winding river towards the sea, and eyes him admiringly as he revisits his friends with many a yarn, a pocket full of hard cash, and a chest crammed with interesting curiosities from foreign countries, but never thinks of him as reefing sails in the cold and gloom of a wet tempestuous night, keeping weary watch when landsmen sleep in secure dwellings, or subsisting for weeks on half rations, when baffling winds have long delayed their course. Hence it is no uncommon thing to find an early passion for the sea, like many another "love at first sight," change into disappointment and disgust.

But to this there are exceptions, and ever must be, if England is to continue the mistress of the seas, for surely true success cannot be looked for in any calling that is not pursued with enthusiasm. Such an exception was Charles March. Of his mode of life he continued to be enamoured, and so was an efficient navigator, a skilful captain. The profligacy of some of his men was at times a cause of disquietude, but his vocation itself was his delight.

So with pleasure he continued passing "to and fro," and on Saturday, September 16, 1826, cheerily sailed from Bristol for Cardiff. Here he was to take in a cargo of iron for Naples, but owing to some defect in the machinery of the iron works, his freight was tardily supplied, and the vessel detained some weeks. During this delay he had public worship on board his vessel every Sunday. One Sabbath morn-

ing whilst arranging the awning on the deck, the harbour master, who had on some ground or another taken umbrage against him, abused him roundly, telling him he might as well turn his ship into a floating chapel at once, and assuring him he was only mocking the Almighty, by getting his men to spread the awning, instead of sending them to some meeting-house ashore. With his accustomed self-command, Captain March went quietly on with his preparations for the service, which, as he observed, "could not be made on Saturday, for the nights were so stormy that they would soon blow his screens adrift." That same evening he had his revenge of his calumniator. Passing along by the canal at dusk during a storm of wind and rain, he overtook a person whose hat was blown into the water. Having assisted the stranger in its recovery, and offered him the shelter of his umbrella as he tied a handkerchief over his head, he found he was standing face to face with the harbour master. He was rejoiced to be enabled thus to administer a silent rebuke by his act of courtesy. It had its effect.

At length all was ready for sailing, and the *Ann and Mary* once more left the shores of England. She encountered heavy gales in the Channel, and laboured much under shortened sail, the sea continually making a clean breach over her. "But," says the captain, "with a gracious Protector, plenty of sea room, and a tight ship, we have nothing to fear."

Once more Captain March moored his vessel in the harbour at Naples, where he discharged his cargo of iron. During his sojourn here, two of his seamen, from a mere whim, deserted, and hired themselves aboard the *Planter;* but they soon found they had to deal with a man who, though kind, was firm, for he went at once to the vice-consul, who accompanied him to the vessel in question. As the men were not to be found, their chests were removed under the consul's seal. In the evening they came and begged pardon, and having expressed their sorrow for what they had done, and made promise of better conduct for the future, they were permitted to return to their duty. Thus by promptitude and resolution, insubordination was prevented from becoming contagious.

On Thursday, December 7, 1826, the *Ann and Mary* left in ballast for Malta, where she expected to obtain a convoy, which was absolutely necessary for merchant ships voyaging to the Black Sea, as the Greeks were extensively pirating.

"*Saturday, 9th.*—As we are bound to the island where Paul suffered shipwreck, I have commenced reading his voyage at our evening worship, praying that a blessing may be granted."

In company with quite a little flotilla of ships under the protection of H.M.S. *Philomel*, Captain March left the barren and rocky island of Malta. The guardian commodore hoisting all sail was apparently forgetful of how "leewardly light merchantmen are,"

and many of the company soon lost sight of his top-masts below the horizon; but the *Ann and Mary* being a tolerable sailer kept well in his wake.

"*December* 25, Christmas day.—Much engaged in beating up the gulf of Smyrna; the weather still continues squally and tempestuous. About sunset when in stays, and head well to wind, I was thinking this was the last tack we should make for the night, when we should anchor and meet together at the close of the day, to read and say something about the birth of Christ, and return God thanks for all His mercies; But, alas! I found the ship was fast aground; my anticipated happiness was now changed to the prospect of a night's work in getting her off again; but whilst we were preparing to carry an anchor out, God in His great and constant mercy sent a strong wind, which blew or backed the ship off into deep water, when we soon clewed up the sails and let go the anchor. It is remarkable that, contrary to my usual practice, I put the helm down quite quickly, which soon brought the ship's head round; whereas, had I followed my usual method, she would in all probability have remained on shore much longer, and perhaps have been eventually lost. The best reason for such "lucky hits" is, that God has the hearts of all in His hand. Having been permitted to meet with the crew as I intended, I now desire afresh to commit myself, them, and the ship into the hands of my blessed and

faithful Creator. I find on examination that the chart led me astray.

"*Saturday*, 30*th.*—Smyrna. Since my arrival here I have commenced reading at our evening worship the address to the seven churches, one of which was located at this town. What a change is there here for the worse since then!

"*Sunday*, 31*st.*—Attended divine service at the consul's, where the Rev. ——— preached with some light but no heat. In the afternoon, service was held on board the packet brig, when two missionaries preached and prayed. Here was both life and spirit. In the evening I read the epistle to the church in Smyrna, with the life of Polycarp its angel, to whom it was addressed.

"And now the day is far spent, the year almost ended. O my soul, what hast thou done for Christ? Shame and confusion prevent my looking up. My last breathing this year must be, 'God be merciful to me a sinner,' for Christ's sake. Amen."

Whilst tarrying at this port he contrived to see everything of interest; threading his way through the dirty streets, which were so narrow that, as the camels were passing with their loads, he had to take shelter in an entry, or crawl under their burdens; scrambling over the ruins of the castle, and visiting the spot where Polycarp is said to have suffered martyrdom. The Rev. Mr Brewer, an American missionary, seeking a passage from Smyrna to Constantinople by the

Ann and Mary, her captain would hear of no payment, but said he should consider him as his guest, and count his companionship a privilege. Having agreed to take a large portrait of the King of France which was destined for the French ambassador at Constantinople, Captain March found it unnecessary to seek a convoy, a French man-of-war being appointed to conduct the vessel to the Dardanelles, and see to the safety of his most precious and painted majesty.

Ere leaving Smyrna, the matter of Sabbath observance gave rise to a conflict between a sense of duty and self-interest in the captain's mind, in which the former gained a complete victory. It was Saturday evening and the wind was fair, and if advantage were not taken of it, the vessel might be detained eight or ten weeks, and the question was, Should he proceed to sea the next morning? He consulted the missionary, who was as perplexed as himself. "He was," says Captain March, "a spiritual friend though not a guide. I retired to rest praying that God would direct me into the path of duty, and deliver me from the fear of man.

"*Sunday, 21st.*—The moment I awoke this morning, my mind returned to God to know what was to be done, when I was fully persuaded it was right to remain and sanctify the Sabbath, though wind and weather were quite fair. It seemed to me as though I heard a voice from heaven, saying, Now I will test

your principle. I knew that those who were careless of religion would sail on such an occasion as this, and thought there was now an opportunity to stand up for God. I therefore concluded on remaining, and at eleven o'clock, with the missionary, went on board the packet for divine worship, where I was much strengthened and refreshed. The captain of the packet remarked, what a pity it was to lose this wind. I replied in the affirmative, but observed that this was a day of rest, and set apart for spiritual purposes, and that we should eventually lose nothing by serving God and keeping His commandments, for I had found I could get more work done in six days than in seven. As I have every reason to believe that this rank piece of Methodism will create some talk here, my desire is, that through it God may be glorified."

Pleasant and memorable to Captain March was his passage to Constantinople. With a fair wind wafting the vessel swiftly on her course, he leaned over the bulwarks, conversing with his spiritual friend and guest, whilst the scenes of old world history glided past, with all their rich association. There on the larboard rose Mitylene, hallowed by the foot of Paul, and there on the starboard, a little in-shore on the mainland, was the site of the church of Pergamos. Then Capa Baba, called Lectum in olden time, was passed with its lofty mound, declared by tradition to be the tomb and monument of Ajax. Next sailing between Tenedos and the mainland, the plains of

Troy were discerned, recalling the scenes of the ancient epic; and then, passing through the Dardanelles, Abydos in ruined heaps reminded of how Leander, breasting the cold wave to visit his beloved Hero, sank on one unpropitious night amidst the angry billows to rise no more.

> "And where he swam the constant sun lies sleeping,
> Over the verdant plain that makes his bed;
> And all the noisy waves go freshly leaping,
> Like gamesome boys over the churchyard dead."

And here was the point at which the army of the great Xerxes tramped across the bridge of boats on its bootless campaign, and yonder the spot where the proud monarch is said to have reviewed his armament, and as he saw the myriad troops that darkened the land, and the warlike galleys that crowded the straits, to have given way to a momentary emotion of sorrow, weeping to think that in a few short years every one of that vast and active host would be numbered with the dead.

Many were the towns visited during the passage through the Dardanelles, and strange and touching was the sight of ancient grandeur and modern squalor, nestling in close and unnatural embrace; marble column and frieze built up into mean hovels, and wretched dwelling-places clinging like parasitic growths to the remains of magnificent temples. At each of these places Captain March distributed

tracts, trusting that the gospel would elevate the degraded inhabitants.

On Friday, January 11, the city of Constantinople rose to view, its mosques, minarets, and piles of building making an imposing spectacle, which contrasted all the more painfully with the miserable interior, where narrow streets, swarms of vermin, wild ownerless dogs and filthy people, disgusted those who had been accustomed to western cleanliness and refinement.

Captain March did not fail to see, nor could he refrain from marvelling at the religious performances of the dervishes. Entering into one of their colleges, a magnificent octagonal building beautifully decorated, he stood in the small railed-off place allotted to spectators and worshippers who did not wear the dervish dress, whence he had a good view of the whole service. In the centre of the polished floor were the devotees. For three quarters of an hour they continued praying and prostrating themselves on the ground, then the music sounded and they marched slowly round the area three times, bowing low at the eastern and western ends. After this the teetotum movement commenced. "They turned round one after the other, first with their arms across their breast, and when at full speed, extended out straight. Twelve of them continued this for twenty minutes, with the exception of two stoppages they made when they walked round the area once. Their motion was so

quick that their long flowing gowns formed a complete circle, and they looked like figures set in motion by machinery. One who performed close to me, and by no means the quickest, turned fifty-eight times in one minute by my watch. The longest time this motion lasted between the walking, was seven minutes, so that in this way they turned round more than four hundred times without stopping, and this without the least apparent giddiness. The scene closed with prayer, a shout, and kissing the hand of the head priest." The conclusion of the whole matter was, that "bodily exercise profiteth little."

The captain's sympathy was awakened during his residence at Constantinople in the behalf of three converted Jews, who, for their profession of Christianity had been terribly persecuted by their brethren, at the instigation of whom the Turkish authorities had thrust them into prison and loaded them with irons, on the charge of conspiracy against the government. To obtain for them such mitigation of their lot as money might procure, and secure their release, was an object at which he aimed during his stay at the port, and after his return home.

On the 14th February the *Ann and Mary* was sailing through the Bosphorus, which, fringed on either hand with picturesque mosques, frowning batteries, and scattered residences, presented the appearance of a majestic river. It was an inclement season in which for the first time to enter on the dangers of

the Black Sea. The cold was very great, the water froze in the cabin, and through storms of snow and sleet, and dark tempestuous nights, the vessel staggered on its course. On the 27th anchor was cast within Odessa Mole. Here Captain March resumed his custom of using his vessel as a sanctuary.

"*Sunday, March* 4.—I had an increase at our worship this day, in the crew of the *Henry Arnot.* They had been at work in the morning, but refused to continue labouring through the day, and chose rather to come and worship God with us. Their captain hired other men, whose pay, he said, should be deducted from the wages of the crew. The work about which they were employed was handing dunnage on board, and trimming the cargo of coals ready for discharging in the morning. This I conceived to be quite unnecessary, but greed of gain appears to have been the cause of it. It was a singular providence that the fifth chapter of the Epistle of James was read with its censure of oppressive covetousness, and its injunction of patience to those who suffered thereby. Indeed our service seemed, quite unintentionally on my part, to be adapted for the comfort of these persecuted men. As many English vessels are here, and I only stand up for God, I expect to be accused of encouraging insubordination, although I knew nothing of the men's intention or grievance until just as we were about to assemble for worship."

On the three succeeding Sabbaths, during which he remained at Odessa, the services were continued, and many strangers from the other vessels were found in attendance. One day while at this port he invited two captains, both regardless of religion, to dine and spend the evening with him. Worship was conducted by their godly host ere they separated; concerning this he remarks: "I can truly say that I feel little delight in such company, but my hope is that I may do good, and show that Christianity does not hinder geniality. I have not unfrequently a desire to be monkish, and so shut myself up from the society of worldly people. Against this I feel it my duty to strive.

"*Wednesday*, 21*st*.—Busy taking in our cargo. Yesterday assisted the *Midas* in raising a lighter laden with iron, which had sunk in the gale. It is remarkable that, about twelve months since, I had a dispute with the owners of this said vessel about some freight. They not having settled it to my satisfaction, remarked that if ever they were under my power, they supposed I should 'sweat them;' to which I replied, that if they were in my power to-morrow I would take no advantage, but act with uprightness. I was pleased therefore to have this opportunity of showing them a kindness, which must have been the more welcome as no other vessel was ready to assist them."

Whilst at this port, Captain March was seized

with sickness, accompanied with a stupor that made him dread the possibility of passing out of life unsustained by the consolations of religion, and which convinced him afresh of the utter folly of postponing the care of his soul till a dying hour. He writes: "I was in so much pain one day that I lost the love of life, and felt no comfort in death. I had scarcely resolution to get what medicine I needed from the medicine chest. I felt as if I could die like a brute in a field almost without thought. The substance of my prayer was that God would quicken and arouse me out of this dreadful state. It reminded me of people I had seen when residing in Suffolk, who, though at the point of death, seemed to exercise no thought. Such people are said to 'die like lambs.' O Lord, preserve me from such a death!"

At this time, too, he much mourned that the crew were not converted, and cried, "O Lord, grant that I may not become weary in well-doing. May I have more love to all the souls that are with me, and exercise more meekness, patience, and forbearance. Help me to examine myself, O God, and to discover whether the fault is in me, or in them, that they do not turn to Thee. Grant that I may not be a hindrance but a furtherance to their salvation, and forgive all my hastiness, and everything sinful in my heart and life, for Jesus' sake."

During the whole of his sojourn at Odessa the *Ann and Mary*, in common with other trading vessels, was

kept in quarantine; a walled walk on the shore of about half a mile in length was all the liberty allowed the foreigners, and communications with the resident merchants were permitted only through gratings, so Captain March saw nothing of the town. At length, the discharging completed, and the vessel reloaded with iron, tallow, &c., anchor was weighed, and the bows turned again towards England. When within about forty miles of the Bosphorus, the sky became overcast, heavy rain shut in their range of vision, and the wind, which in direction was fair, rose into a gale. As, under such circumstances, it was impossible to make the narrow entrance to the straits, the vessel was "hauled on a wind" to the eastward. As night gathered round the storm increased in fury, and the ship, in spite of every effort, drifted on towards the Asiatic coast. Its destruction seemed inevitable. All was made ready for casting anchor as a last resort, and the axes were ground for cutting away the masts when occasion required. "But just as the peril was most imminent," says the journal, "the wind veered about two points in our favour, so that we were mercifully saved. My mind during this very trying season was much exercised; the charge of the ship and the lives of the men, who were far from God, was like a great burden, the weight of which was increased by my own load of sin. I read the 107th Psalm, and found much comfort from the 28th verse, being led hereby to hope that God would bring us out of our

distresses. Often I renewed my covenant with God, resolving to serve Him better in the future.

"*Thursday, April* 5.—As daylight appeared we were anxiously looking over the lee-beam for the land, when we discovered it about fifteen or twenty miles off. The weather began to moderate, and we made sail to the westward. At 8 A.M. we discovered the Bosphorus about two points on the lee-bow. No sooner had we done so than it again became thick with rain, and for two hours we could see nothing; but God, who is rich in mercy, gave us another peep of the land, which enabled us to pass the Castles at 3 P.M., and at six o'clock we were safe at Constantinople. 'O God, open thou my lips, that my mouth may show forth thy praise!'"

From Constantinople he returned to Smyrna, where he waited for a convoy, the Greek piracies being on the increase, and some Algerine cutters engaging in their old work. Whilst here he was much grieved to discover that the orphan boy J. Haddon, who had been under his care for two years, was addicted to lying and drinking, and had sold some of his garments to obtain the means for gratifying his vicious propensities. The captain had been very anxious for his temporal and spiritual welfare. He had seen to it that he wanted neither clothes nor money, had taught him to read, write, and swim, had instructed him in arithmetic, navigation, and practical seamanship, and assured him that he should have a mate's

berth when he was out of his time. The boy himself had said he "could not have a better master, he was like a father to him." Captain March's depression was naturally very great. He says, under date of April 25: "I trust I may yet see the hand of God in this affliction, but at present a dark cloud intercepts my spiritual vision. O Lord, I am greatly discouraged, and my heart is bowed down. Let the seed of Thy truth yet take root in the heart of this youth." On the same afternoon he sought to divert his thoughts from his sorrow by travelling on horseback round the bay, through olive groves and vineyards. "This," he writes, "was a happy change. The scenery furnished my poor distracted mind with many profitable and sacred thoughts. The vines had now begun to show their blossom and fruit, which plainly distinguished them from those growing in a wild state by the wayside. 'Oh,' thought I, 'what a mercy to be planted in God's vineyard by His own right hand, and to be kept in the vine as a bearing branch.' The wells, which are built round and are a little elevated from the ground, preached a delightful sermon to me on the conversation of the Saviour with the Samaritan woman. The olives appear to bear much fruit in old age. May I resemble them if my life be spared. Here for a while I seemed to forget my troubles, was wrapped in holy thought, and enabled to draw water from the wells of salvation."

Under convoy of H.M.S. *Philomel* (Captain Lord

Ingestre,) the *Ann and Mary* sailed through the Ionian Sea, passing many islands, which though formerly cultivated, were now left untilled, their inhabitants having taken to the more exciting and profitable occupation of pirating.

Sunday, May 13, was an eventful day. At 6 P.M., while Captain March was in his cabin dressing, his mind turning towards the sacred associations of the Sabbath, the mate informed him that a boat from the *Philomel*, manned and armed, was on board ready to attack a bombard which was coming up with them astern, and which was supposed to be a pirate. Having offered a brief prayer, that if any should be slain in the impending strife their souls might be prepared for their solemn change, he went on deck. Every device which could retard the progress of the *Ann and Mary* without awakening the suspicions of the pursuer was resorted to. On she came under Greek colours, her black hull breasting the waves, and her royal and sky-sails all set, eager for her prey, little thinking that she was hastening to her own destruction. But at length, when within a distance of two or three miles, she perceived that the *Philomel* was a man-of-war. "Down went the studding-sails, and she hauled on a wind." The *Philomel* immediately gave chase, and now the pursuer became the pursued. Carrying a heavy press of sail, luffing and bearing away like a frightened bird, she flew hither and thither in her eagerness to escape; but steadily and

surely as a fate, the *Philomel* gained upon her, and at noon, after firing two shots, brought the bombard to. It was found that she mounted four guns, was full of firearms, and had a crew of thirty-one men. Her decks were strewn with powder and cartridge, and she had some plunder on board, but no papers. Had the *Ann and Mary* been unprotected, lamentable would have been the consequences. Having reached safe waters she bade farewell to her guardian, who departed with her captive, the ship to be confiscated, the crew, who could not be induced to confess which was their captain, to meet the due reward of their lawless conduct.

The rest of the voyage homeward, after parting with the *Philomel*, was not marked by any special adventure. One day Captain March harpooned two porpoises. A note relating to this will show his gratitude for minor mercies, and his considerateness for the brute creation. "Thus God hath been pleased to give all hands a fresh mess as long as it will keep. I find that one porpoise would have been sufficient for us at once, therefore I hope for the future to kill no more than we can eat, as God cannot be glorified in mere sporting."

On Tuesday, June 3, the *Ann and Mary* anchored safely at Portishead roads, and, to the disappointment of all on board, was put under ten days quarantine. When at length they were liberated, Captain March's first care was to obtain assistance for the persecuted

Jews at Constantinople. A friend gave him an introduction to Hannah More, of whose interest in such a matter of philanthropy he was confident. On approaching her residence, the taste with which the grounds were laid out struck the captain as indicative of her appreciation of the beautiful; but all this was forgotten in the presence of the authoress herself. Eighty-three years of age, her hair white as snow, she was afterwards described by her visitor as a "female patriarch." Though almost a prisoner to the house through physical infirmity, "she possessed," he says, "the animation of a person not half her age; her quick, restless eyes noticed everything, and she was full of conversation of a useful kind." Her purse was immediately opened for the aid of the suffering disciples in the East. Admiral Pearson also visited Captain March at Bristol to hear the news and to offer his contribution. Alluding to this zealous Christian, the journal says: "He practises self-denial that he may do and give more for the cause of Christ. I seldom see a man more devoted to the service of his Master than the Admiral. He appears to live and breathe in Christ, and Christ in him." Much additional assistance did Captain March obtain, and so was prospered in his labour of love.

Purposing to visit his friends for some time, he now resigned the command of the *Ann and Mary*. During the next eight months he kept no journal, but again makes an entry on Friday, Feb. 1, 1828, when

in command of the *Huskisson* he proceeded out of London dock for Sierra Leone.

Commending the crew and passengers, and all committed to his care, to God's protection, he once more sought to track his way over the waste ocean to a country which to him was unknown. A storm arose as soon as the vessel was in the Channel, which led to an exhibition of pusillanimity on the part of the crew, and a quiet, reasonable firmness in their captain that proved victorious.

"*Monday, Feb.* 11.—Having borne up for Falmouth in the gale, the pilot came on board at 8 A.M. We have been hard at work the whole day endeavouring to beat into the harbour, and at last were obliged to anchor about three miles off.

"*Tuesday,* 13*th.*—The wind being fair we made preparations for proceeding down the Channel, but before the anchor was up, the crew knocked off heaving and refused to work, declaring that the ship was not fit to go to sea, being too short manned. Having consulted with the officers, who were of a different opinion, I ordered them on the quarter-deck, and told them that the ship was already at sea, and that she had beat in here during a very heavy gale when others were blown off the land, and had thus shown her seaworthy capacities. I told them they would find it very difficult in a court of justice to prove the contrary, and that in point of fact I had one more hand than the owners stated. I added

that it would be a serious thing to detain the ship with a fair wind, and my advice to them was to turn to with a good-will and proceed to sea without delay. At this they all consented."

It must have been an interesting sight to see the men with their varied statures, countenances, and complexions, grouped on the quarter-deck, and the captain, his officers standing by him, speaking quiet words of wisdom, till, yielding to the force of his remarks, they turned to their labour, with a consciousness that they had to deal with one who could not be trifled with, and must be respected.

After a voyage of five weeks, the *Huskisson* cast anchor at Sierra Leone. Here its captain visited the schools and sanctuaries, pleased with everything that betokened the presence of Christianity, but shocked at the prevailing immorality of the place.

At this time an incident occurred illustrative of Captain March's forgiving disposition, and which showed that while he shunned unnecessary work on the Sabbath, yet no man was more ready than he to engage on that day in a labour of benevolence. The *Lady Sherbrooke* was anchored near the *Huskisson*, and her commander was greatly offended with Captain March for not suffering what he conceived to be an imposition at his hands.

"*Sunday, April* 20, 1828.—Soon after divine service I observed Captain T——'s ship driving. I hailed and told him his ship would drive ashore if he

did not run a hawser to us. This was at length accomplished by our own boat. I then went on board with my mate and crew, all *his* men being on shore catching monkeys and parrots, and hove up his anchors, which were fouled in a most extraordinary way, so that we were nearly six hours in clearing them and anchoring the ship again. Thus we were instrumental in saving his vessel. If God should make this event the means of doing good to Captain T—— and his Sabbath-breaking crew, I shall rejoice that my Sunday afternoon has been spent in toil and labour."

The neighbourhood of Freetown had naturally much interest for one who was a philanthropist, and he visited with delight the villages of liberated negroes that were scattered amidst a mountainous and beautiful region, where vegetation was profuse and pine apples grew wild by the wayside. Whilst thus rejoicing in the emancipation of those who had been in a miserable state of thraldom, he was pained as he saw tokens of the horrors from which they had been rescued. He went over a slave schooner of one hundred tons which had been recently captured. "She carried two hundred and eighty slaves. The men and women had been landed, but about forty children remained on board badly afflicted with ophthalmia. The slaves' deck below was two feet four inches in height, with a partition between the men and women, the former being kept in irons. Their allowance of water was from one to two pints per diem

Their sufferings must have been indescribable, yet I find many men in office in this place who still advocate the atrocious system."

On the 23d of May, whilst beating down the river, a tornado overtook the *Huskisson.* Amidst torrents of rain and furious gusts of wind, the artillery of heaven flashing and reverberating around, Captain March stood on deck, his spirit uplifted within him by this manifestation of divine power, and thinking of the evidences of cruelty he had just witnessed. Cowper's words suggested themselves to his mind:

"Is there, as ye sometimes tell us,
Is there One who reigns on high?
Has He bid you buy and sell us,
Speaking from His throne the sky?

"Hark! He answers! wild tornados
Strewing yonder sea with wrecks,
Wasting towns, plantations, meadows,
Are the voice with which He speaks!

"He foreseeing what vexations
Afric's sons should undergo,
Fixed their tyrants' habitations
Where the whirlwinds answer—No."

The cargo of timber being completed, the *Huskisson* sailed for England at the end of May. The passengers were a sore trial to Captain March, some of them being open opponents to Christianity, and others guilty of an irreverence that was shocking to a devout mind. One of them inveighed one afternoon against the captain's religion, and, with the self-condemnation of the ungodly, charged him with "consigning them

all to hell." Very quiet was the reply that pointed out that judgment belongeth to God alone, and that each man must know the alternative awaiting him if he refused to comply with the conditions laid down in the Bible as necessary to eternal life. So he marred not the effect of his remarks by an impetuous or resentful spirit. But to mockers he did not always offer a reply, remembering that the Master showed His disciples that there were occasions when they were not to cast pearls before swine; at the same time, he never ceased his efforts to disseminate the word of truth amongst the thoughtless. In a most literal way he "cast bread on the waters:" a number of empty bottles having accumulated on board he put a few tracts in each, and corking them tightly committed them to the deep. "I should feel," he says, "great happiness if hereafter I should hear of some of these novel messengers doing good to the soul of some poor sinner." When the secrets of all hearts shall be made known, it may be found that these floating missives were the means of a new life to some careless ones, who, with nought but an idle curiosity, examined their contents as they came drifting in on the tide.

It was a lonely voyage home. For forty days they saw but one vessel besides their own on the vast circle of waters; and when the *Huskisson* was approaching a familiar latitude the captain's heart, though not discontented with his present lot, leaped

forward with strong yearning to the anticipated joys of home.

"*Weanesday, July* 9.—We are now about six hundred miles from Land's End, and I begin to look forward with pleasure to the enjoyment of the society of my Christian friends once more. If my present shipmates were all God-fearing men my happiness would be almost too great for this world of tribulation; but I hope, through God's great mercy, the trial may be sanctified, and that I may part in peace with them all."

Arrived at home, he found a happy contrast to the comparative isolation of his seafaring life in intercourse with beloved relatives and friends, and in joining with Christian congregations in public prayer and praise. He was pleased also with the opportunity afforded him of listening to the ministrations of the Rev. J. Clayton and Andrew Read. These enjoyments, however, soon came to an end, for eight days after he had discharged the cargo his vessel left the dock, bound for St Petersburg.

"This voyage," he writes, "being a very anxious one, on account of our always being so near land, I desire more especially to commend myself to the mercy and protection of God." Ere he left, the *Lady Sherbrooke* arrived from Sierra Leone. She had loaded at the same time with his vessel, and had been sixteen days longer in the passage. This was a feather in the cap of the *Huskisson*; and, as if con-

scious of her superiority, she gaily winged her way before a favouring breeze toward the intricate Baltic. Sailing by Lowestoft and Yarmouth the captain thought of the happy months he had spent in that neighbourhood, and breathed good wishes for those dear to him, who, pursuing their daily duties amidst the plains of Suffolk, had little idea that on the distant vessel, that dim and ghost-like was wafted across the horizon, stood one who was commending them to God in prayer. This time he had no passengers, on which he congratulated himself, hoping that as he would have more retirement, he would be enabled to cultivate the garden of the heart with increased care.

Though untroubled by passengers, the new crew caused him some anxiety, for there was a good deal of profanity and open ungodliness amongst them; till, thoroughly disheartened, he felt disposed to cease his efforts for their spiritual good. But a ray of light broke unexpectedly on the gloom of his soul. Under date of Sunday, August 7, he writes: "When I was almost cast down from discouragement, and ready to give up the worship of God, one of the crew came and begged that I would continue our daily service, (which for two evenings I had been obliged to omit,) as he and another man wished always to attend. This was a loud voice for me not to be weary in well-doing. I thanked God and took courage."

Passing through Elsinore roads, and leaving Copenhagen on the right, Captain March entered

for the first time into the Baltic. More than one narrow escape had he from dangerous shoals and rapid currents, but at early dawn on August 25th he "beat into Cronstadt." Having gone by steamboat to St Petersburg, the consignee informed him that, owing to the price of tallow, he must wait some time for his cargo; so he had leisure to visit the chief objects of interest in the Russian capital.

It was at this time that he had the opportunity, not previously afforded him, of reading the reports of the May meetings in London; and the words that had awakened many a sympathetic echo in the hearts of those who heard them uttered in the metropolis of our land, kindled a holy enthusiasm in our captain, as he perused them on board the *Huskisson* beneath the frowning forts of Cronstadt.

Captain March soon found that he was in the vicinity of a capricious despotism. His library was sealed up by the custom-house officers, and he was prohibited from having more than seven books at once, not being allowed even the use of the whole of the volumes of Matthew Henry's Commentary at one time. This restriction was enforced to prevent the sale of works relating to matters of an ecclesiastical or political nature.

As an instance of the routine of the St Petersburg authorities, he records in his journal: "Mr Giddes and Mr M'N—— informed me that a few years ago a destructive fire broke out which consumed all the

property contained in the deal yards. The fire was first discovered in a yard under Government seal for embezzlement. The sentinel being informed of it, said he could not allow the seal to be broken for the purpose of extinguishing the fire without an order from the Mole guard-house. The officers of this department said they had no power to grant the order; they must apply to the police office. This was accordingly done; but before the requisite permission arrived, the premises were well-nigh destroyed and the fire had spread to other buildings."

During the delay of the *Huskisson* in port, the chief mate gave way to an old habit of drunkenness, and some of the crew indulged in licentiousness, the awful penalties of which became manifest. Captain March was grieved in his soul at this spectacle, and sought to check their wickedness by "reasoning of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come;" and as he shrank with loathing from the vices he rebuked, he declared that if religion had done nothing more than deliver him from debasing transgression in the life that now is, it was indeed a divine blessing. "I find," he writes, "that it is a mercy to be kept from sin in this world, even though I should be cast into hell in the next."

At this time he had to part with his cook, Mathew Phillip, the only avowedly and consistently pious man on board. Dropsy had manifested itself in his system, and he was obliged to enter the hospital.

Thinking of the shortening days, the approaching winter, and the dangers of an unfamiliar and land-locked sea, and remembering the wickedness of many of his crew, he says, speaking of Mathew Phillip: "I have thought that perhaps God has taken him out of the ship in mercy to him, (he being the only righteous man on board,) as He did Lot, and that now we rebels who remain are doomed to destruction, ship and all, on our homeward voyage. May God be gracious to us for Christ's sake." He frequently visited this poor sufferer, seeking to minister that consolation to him of which at times he stood much in need; for though his hope of eternal life was firmly rooted in the Saviour, yet there were periods when the thought of dying in a strange land, unable to bid farewell to his beloved wife and children, was an unutterable sorrow, and he could scarce bring himself to say, "Thy will be done."

At the time of this Captain March's first visit to St Petersburg, the Russian Government, though continuing to allow the Bible Society to sell what books they had on hand, would not permit any more to be printed. A gentleman applying to him for a Bible offered to take charge of his whole stock, to which kind proposal he gladly acceded. Being unable to obtain permission from the custom-house officers to land the Bibles, he ventured on the only smuggling expedition in which he ever engaged. On a stormy day, when mingled snow and rain were falling, he

landed his precious cargo in a boat. "I have," he says, "felt much happiness in getting a wetting in so good a cause."

Soon after his arrival at St Petersburg Captain March called on the Rev. R. Knill of the London Missionary Society. "I invited Mr Knill to preach on board my ship, but he said it was not allowed by law, the Bethel flag and all religious meetings being suppressed amongst the sailors. He further advised me not to have any religious service on board during my stay in Russia." On another Sunday he writes: "I continue to follow the Rev. R. Knill's advice by having no worship on board, as he told me the Russian authorities would put a stop to it. I do not feel satisfied upon this point." Not long after, at the Custom House, he fell in with a Captain Wilkins, a pious man, who, perceiving in the manner and countenance of the master of the *Huskisson* something indicative of his possessing the "peace of God that passeth understanding," much surprised him by asking if he did not love the Saviour. They soon became good friends. Of this new acquaintance Captain March says, somewhat naïvely, "I soon found him to be a very humble Christian, but a little sectarian, as he appeared to wish I would become a member of the Wesleyan Society." On another occasion he says of him: "He is a complete Methodist, but I love him because he loves Christ, and I see in him some things I hope to imitate." These

two good men strengthened each other's hands, and determined one Sunday to have public worship on board the *Huskisson.* "We soon made room, and had the people down; a pious mate belonging to the *Alexander* gave us countenance. After singing a hymn, Captain Wilkins prayed, read a chapter, and exhorted; at the close of his remarks I concluded with prayer. I felt happy to show that we feared God rather than man, and pray that His blessing may follow the service. I am determined to go on in my old way of serving and following God openly until put down by force of arms."

At a subsequent period he learned from Mr Knill that the door they had opened continued unclosed, and that whenever opportunity occurred there was preaching amongst the sailors. From this same source, too, he was informed that the British consul expressed himself as glad that these services were maintained, for since their recommencement he had had comparatively little trouble with the seamen.

Many were the temptations held out to Captain March, at this and other ports, to small dishonesties, which in the gross would have proved largely remunerative. Whilst settling for the provisioning of the ship during her stay at Cronstadt, the baker in making out the bill asked if he should put down a few extra roubles, which when paid by the owners would be to the Captain's advantage. "No," was the answer, "I wish the bill to be correct." Another creditor with

whom he was settling took off a small discount, which Captain March deducted from the amount. "How nice you are," said the man; to which he replied, "I am only an agent, and wish to render a just account." Had he acted as he was desired, and as not a few captains do, he would have secured some not insignificant sums; for occasionally as much as ten per cent was deducted from the accounts, and at Cronstadt alone he laid out hundreds of pounds, but he was faithful in little as well as in much. "I know," he says, "that I am often laughed at and scouted for my singularity, and I bless God that I am. Oh that He may hold me fast in His ways! Although my riches may not increase as fast as others, yet if I can but approve myself in the sight of God, how shall I rejoice."

The long detention at Cronstadt, though at the time vexatious, was providential; for at the very period when otherwise he would have been threading his way down the Baltic, some terrible gales prevailed, which destroyed no less than seven English vessels, from the crew of one of which only two were saved, and the Russian guardship at Revel foundered at her anchors with forty-two souls. Thus he learned not to murmur when circumstances seemed untoward, and knew the happiness of those who

> "Feel at heart that One above
> In perfect wisdom, perfect love,
> Is working for the best."

On Monday, Oct. 27, in company with a hundred sail he left Cronstadt to encounter the dangers of the Gulf of Finland, whose many shoals and rocks, and whose limited breadth, not exceeding in some places fifteen miles, made it anxious sailing during the long nights. Yet he found time to fulfil some of the duties of a pastor.

"*Friday, Nov.* 14.—I was much encouraged to-day by one of the crew, H. F., coming to me in a very modest manner to converse with me about the care of his soul. He appears to be much in earnest, to have paid great attention to my little exposition of an evening, and asked me many pleasing questions. He meets with much opposition from some of his shipmates. May the Lord bless and keep him."

A gale having compelled the *Huskisson* to put into Mordon harbour, Norway, Captain March had an interesting *rencontre* with one whom he had formerly met on different terms. Dining on board the brig of Captain Dederickson, a Dane, he discovered that his host had commanded a galliot which was captured by H.M.S. *Egeria*, of which Captain March was then a midshipman.

A great peril overtook the *Huskisson* a few days after this.

"*Tuesday, Dec.* 2.—Soon after midnight the wind became foul, and by sunrise it was blowing a heavy gale from W.S.W.

"*Wednesday,* 3*d.*—Early in the morning all the larboard gangway rails and stanchions were washed

away, and part of our deck load got adrift and was carried overboard. We immediately wore ship and began to clear the wreck. The mate and myself were now employed in nailing canvas over the holes which the stanchions had left, to keep the ship from sinking. The sea continued very high, and destruction seemed near us all. The second mate told me he thought the ship had settled a foot and a half in the water; and one of the men informed me they had been pumping for three hours and could not gain on her. It now appeared we were fast hastening to the eternal world, but as I laboured much under the hidings of God's face, and felt very unprepared to die, I thought He would manifest Himself to me as a reconciled Father in Christ, or spare me a little longer. While in my heart I kept begging for mercy, I endeavoured to rally and cheer the men at their duty, both by precept and example, so that under the blessing of God we were enabled to keep our heads above water. In the afternoon I stood in towards the Norway coast in hopes of getting into a port, but the weather continued so tempestuous and thick that I was unable to accomplish my purpose."

Early the next day he entered the harbour of Christiansand, into which many other shattered vessels had run for shelter, and like the *Huskisson* were compelled to tarry for repairs. On survey it was found necessary to discharge part of the cargo, and twenty-one carpenters being procured for the re-

fitting, the ringing blows of their hammers soon reported progress. Enticements to safe and remunerative fraud were not wanting in Christiansand. "I am amazed," he wrote, "to witness the depravity of man. Temptations are daily presented to me to be dishonest, and defraud the underwriters. I was asked if I did not wish to cut away any sails in the gale, that I might give the pilot £5 and take his receipt for £60 or £70. I was further given to understand, in an indirect way, that now was a fair opportunity of making a little money. I thank God for grace to resist."

Whilst he would not by sin make haste to be rich, he sought by the service of Christ to lay up treasure in heaven, visiting with frequency, as long as he remained in port, a Captain Osborne of the *Shamrock*, who was at sick quarters, several of his ribs having been broken in the late gale; and ere he bade him farewell he was rejoiced to find that his thoughts and affections were tending towards the Saviour.

At length he was once more treading the familiar streets of Bristol, and in his journal makes special note of his enjoyment of the Sabbath days. With much delight he listened to the preaching of the Rev. Robert Hall. Of course he did not always find his discourses equally impressive and interesting, but he says: "His prayers make amends for an occasionally inferior sermon; they are so full of petitions of a spiritual nature that I long to carry them home with me, and bear them once more to a throne of grace."

"My very case," he says, on another occasion, "seemed to be laid before God."

At this time intelligence came from Cronstadt of the death of Mathew Phillip. A few days before his decease he had written to his wife, and also to his pastor, the Rev. —— Winter, telling them that he could not expect they should meet again in this world, and requesting the latter to preach a funeral sermon for him from the words of Isaiah v. 6, 7, on board the floating chapel, where he first shed tears for sin. "A little before the service," says the journal, "I scoured the quays on the impress service for the King of kings, and brought in all I could find. I think when our friends die it is a loud call to the living for renewed exertions."

During the service a brief account of the departed sailor from the pen of Captain March was read, of which the following is an extract:—"Having been requested to make a statement in relation to the late Mathew Phillip, I feel pleasure in bearing testimony to his Christian character. I have known him for nearly five years, and observed that he not only avoided the sinful habits of sailors in general, but that his walk and conversation were constantly a rebuke and a warning to his ungodly shipmates, for which he frequently suffered persecution. Another of his employers told me that he could find no fault in him; so it was made manifest that in his case godliness was profitable for all things."

In the month of March the captain set off by coach to revisit his birth-place. Pleasant was the route, and many were the reminiscences of the past and anticipations of the future that might have excused him for indulging in reverie, but he roused himself to care for the spiritual welfare of his fellow-passengers, introducing in a natural and earnest way topics that are of the highest moment, and should be of the deepest interest to all. He conversed about the Messiah with two Jews who were near him, concerning one of whom he was almost hopeless when he found him grossly ignorant of the Scriptures in general, and discrediting the books of the Prophets.

The scenery and old associations of Barnstaple, and the many familiar faces, all gave delight to the returned voyager, but the one thing uppermost in his mind was the eternal salvation of his fellow-creatures. Some whom he had left in a state of utter indifference to religion were if anything more callous, but others he was rejoiced to find were wonderfully changed. One lady to whom some letters of his brother Henry were shown for the purpose of ridicule, had from this very means been led to see that she had been regardless of the love and service she owed to Christ.

Whilst sometimes meeting with banter on account of his views, he knew how good-humouredly to receive and parry it. At a dinner-party a gentleman remarked that he had thought of becoming religious,

but noticing that others who had taken that step lost flesh and were at once seized with some chronic physical ailment, he was fearful of imitating their example. Captain March replied that he formerly held similar views, and used to persuade himself that the calves of godly people's legs wasted away through their fretting, but all the while he was perfectly certain that they were much happier than himself.

Through the fertile valleys of Devon and Somerset Captain March returned to Bristol to make preparations for a voyage to Quebec.

"*Bristol, March* 30.—My poor African black boy Tom was taken ill last week and entered the Infirmary; this evening he sent for me, when to my surprise I found him apparently dying from inflammation of the lungs." The captain was assiduous in his attention to the lad, whose attachment to his master was manifested by his frequently calling for him by name during periods of suffering. Ere he bade him farewell he had no doubt as to his spiritual safety, for the instructions he had given him since first he received him into his service at Sierra Leone had been blessed to the production of a simple but firm trust in Christ. As the vessel was leaving the basin, a friend who had just come from the Infirmary brought an affectionate adieu from Tom, which the captain by no means undervalued, for he acted on the principle contained in George Herbert's words,

"Scorn no man's love, though of a mean degree,
Love is a present for a mighty king."

Beating down the Channel against a contrary wind, the *Huskisson* made but slow progress, reminding the captain of his own spiritual course, as he tacked to and fro, and sought, in spite of opposing forces, to press towards Heaven's harbour. It being necessary to anchor off the Flat Holms for the turn of the tide, he went on shore and visited the only families resident on the island—that of the farmer who rented it, and that of the lighthouse keeper. Interchanging with these a few friendly gifts, he only regretted that he had no religious works which might supply them with some spiritual nutriment. However, when he returned on board he made up two packets of soul-provender to be left by the pilot on his return.

On the details of the outward voyage limited space forbids our dwelling, though one little incident may serve to show how weighty were Captain March's rebukes, although entirely free from the oaths and imprecations which many shipmasters declare are absolutely necessary to secure obedience from the men. Having occasion to reprimand the second mate for sleeping at his watch, the man begged pardon for the offence, saying, as he hung his head, "he would rather have a rope's-ending from any one else than a reproof from the captain."

On the 8th of May the vessel entered the Gulf of St Lawrence, passing many glittering masses of ice,

more to be dreaded as they cruised capriciously about than the stern but stationary rocks at whose base the breakers ever whiten. The further the *Huskisson* advanced, the slower progress did she make, owing to the increasing strength of the current she had to breast, but Captain March scarcely cared to hasten more rapidly past the scenes of exceeding beauty that bordered the noble river. Some of the higher ground was covered with snow; here and there houses peeped forth from little clearings that were made in the dense forests; and, as if to complete the picturesque novelty of the prospect, some Indians came paddling out in their canoes, offering for sale the produce of their fishing and shooting. Soon the scene became more imposing still. Quebec opened to view, its houses scattered over many a hill-side and over many a valley, whilst the falls of Montmorenci came leaping down to add their tributary waters to the mighty St Lawrence. "The sight quite surpassed all my expectations; in the midst of all my mind was happily directed towards God my Creator—the sense of His presence brought me into a delightful frame of mind. What joy would be mine were I only free from sin!"

More delighted was he to meet at Quebec with a proof that his former efforts to do good had been owned of God.

"*Thursday, May* 21.—Received a visit from Captain Whittle, who appears to be in the narrow path. He has established prayer on board his vessel,

and ascribes the change that has taken place in him (under God's blessing) to a religious meeting of captains at Bristol, when I related some of the dealings of God towards me, and urged others to follow Him likewise. I trust he may hold on his way; he seems to be in deep earnest, and to have a warm heart. While I receive comfort and strength from God's goodness in deigning to honour me in any way, His name shall have all the praise."

On the morning of the following Sunday Captain March attended church, but in the afternoon hoisted the Bethel flag and had service on his ship, to which he fetched off some of the idlers who were standing about on the wharves. The Rev. —— Bourne, a Congregationalist, preached an earnest sermon. The following Sunday service was conducted by the Rev. —— Pope, a Wesleyan, and the Sunday afterwards by the Rev. —— Archbold, an Episcopal clergyman. These gentlemen also met each other in partaking of the captain's hospitality, so that there was a true evangelical alliance on board the *Huskisson*.

Whilst in this vicinity Captain March visited the plains of Abraham, and stood with the feelings peculiar to an Englishman on the spot where Wolfe fell. He went also to the falls of Montmorenci, and as he saw the foaming sheet of water rushing down with dazzling gleam and ceaseless roar, he was much moved, and "enjoyed a delightful sense of the divine presence." Even the conversation of his godly friend, a minister,

was at the moment unwelcome, and climbing on to a solitary crag, whence he had a complete view of the falls, he let the grand scene have its full effect upon him. Somewhat similar feelings were awakened on visiting the falls of Chaudière, which, though of less altitude than those of Montmorenci, are of much greater breadth, being four hundred feet across.

On another occasion he made a trip to Lake St Charles, on which he cruised in two canoes lashed together to prevent their capsizing. "The form of the lake is irregular, and is subdivided in the middle by a narrow strait, before passing which all device of man and human art disappear, and nothing but the glorious works of the blessed God are seen. Mountains covered with dense forests with every variety of light and shade, and here and there a leafless tree withered from age or blasted by lightning, all tended to convey to our minds fresh views of the great Sovereign and Lord of the universe." His heart was indeed lifted up to nature's God; and in this lone, wild spot he conversed long and earnestly with his Christian friend on the great truths we profess to hold as the basis of our belief, and which would be oftener on our lips if they were more really in our hearts.

Refreshed as Captain March was by these excursions made in the intervals of business, he was not to leave Quebec without some anxiety. There was at that time a rage amongst the crews in the port

for deserting their vessels; and those ships that were ready for the return voyage offering double wages to any who would serve on board them, held out additional inducements to seamen to break the contracts into which they had entered. Prayer, promptitude, and firmness saved Captain March from the loss and inconvenience which fell on many other captains in port.

"*Saturday, June* 27, 1829.—This day the scene changes. I received information that a great part of my crew was about to desert. I instantly went and told God of it, and begged Him to direct me. In the afternoon I took out a warrant against C. Page, who had already disappeared since yesterday morning. At the close of the day I had all the crew down in the cabin, when I gave them a little warning and advice. I told them I was informed that some had made up their minds to desert, that others were disposed to follow their example, but that there were some who had remained firm and resisted the temptation. I reminded them that we had all bound ourselves by our signatures and a solemn vow to perform this voyage, and that if we broke our vow and were not punished by the laws of this world, we certainly should be in the next; that the increase of wage they would get by going home in another ship would soon be swallowed up; that they would go with the loss of their character, and if they met me at a future time would be ashamed to look me in the

face. I also told them that I did not conceive they were so much to blame as those who sought to seduce them from their own vessels by holding out hopes to them of bettering their condition."

In addition, he refused to let them have any more money, but bade them tell him what they required that he might procure it for them, thus binding them to fulfil their engagements by showing that if they deserted they would forfeit all wages due to them. "These trials," he adds, "have a happy tendency to drive me nearer to God. Blessed be His name, He does not leave me comfortless."

A few days after the deserter Page sent to request to be received back again, but Captain March feeling it necessary to act with a certain degree of rigour so that insubordination might be checked in its beginnings, replied that he would receive him only as a prisoner, and that on his arrival in England he should be tried as a deserter. Of course, after such a message he did not return, and with this solitary exception the crew remained faithful.

On the 8th of July the return voyage was commenced, and in variable weather the *Huskisson* made the best of its way down the St Lawrence. Sometimes the breeze favoured the outward bound vessels, compelling such as were making for the port to come to anchor, then again they had the advantage, while the former were retarded.

"After all that has been written about it," says the

captain, "the wind is a great mystery. It bloweth where it listeth, and we cannot tell whence it cometh nor whither it goeth."

To one entry made in his personal log about this time we may refer as indicating that he had by no means mistaken his vocation. Having reviewed some of the mercies and trials that had been blended in the past, he says, "I am satisfied that no person can enjoy life like a sailor." Such experience was in part owing to great physical robustness, of which we have a hint in a few words jotted down as the *Huskisson* was once more in sight of British soil. He had suffered from a few days' illness, and writes, "I think if my body were oftener afflicted it would be better for my soul, for I enjoy almost constant health."

The Sunday after this he joined in the celebration of the Lord's Supper with the church at Bristol, under the pastoral care of the Rev. —— Thorpe, as he had done that day month with the church at Quebec, of which the Rev. —— Bourne was the minister.

In the short interval which Captain March had on shore, he visited his friends in the eastern counties. Several references in his journal previous to this time intimate that his affections had already been bestowed on one, the thoughts of whom served to brighten all his future, and an entry made on his return to Bristol showed that he did not neglect in this most important step to seek the Divine guidance.

"*Tuesday, Aug.* 18.—Returned from a visit to my friends in Essex, which has occupied in all eleven days. I have been making arrangements as to my future prospects in life, and I now feel satisfied that if ever I have consulted God upon any affair I have done so in this. I am also fully persuaded, let what will take place, that I have had a single eye to the glory of God, and doubt not that He will accept of me and mine, for the sake of Christ."

Like a wise and good man, he followed the leadings of instinct and his own intuitions of right whenever they were not discordant with either the letter or the spirit of Christ's instructions, and at the same time prayed God to show him his error if he were wrong, and frustrate his hopes if they were sinful or unwise.

Towards the end of August Captain March set sail for St Andrews, New Brunswick, praying with especial fervour, as the ship proceeded down the Channel, to be brought back again in safety, that the new and great hope given him might be realized. On the last day of the month, off Lundy Isle, the pilot left the vessel, carrying with him the letters for shore, "one of which," says the captain, "gave me no little pleasure in writing." In the same entry he adds, "It is now nearly twenty-two years since I left my father's house, at the age of fourteen, when he gave me a stock of clothes and a golden guinea, and sent me to Plymouth, where I joined H.M.S. *Hindostan*,

under the command of Captain Lewis Hole. Since that period I have been enabled to provide for myself, so that my guinea has multiplied like the widow's barrel of meal and cruse of oil. I sometimes think I can never mistrust God after having experienced so much of His unbounded kindness. Oh that I may be more and more affected with it!"

Daily worship was practised duringt his as on former voyages, and singing was added to reading and prayer; an apprentice, Henry Lankester, whose friends had placed him with the captain that he might learn navigation, leading the psalmody with a flute. So as the vessel pursued her course, the sound of praise arose from rough, sailor voices, accompanied by the plaintive notes of the flute and the musical plashings of the ocean waves. How different from the bacchanalian and unhallowed staves that are too often shouted forth by the reckless sons of Neptune!

On the night of Sunday, Sept. 11, whilst the *Huskisson* was approaching the Bay of Fundy, which the captain had never before entered, he was exposed to imminent danger, from which God in His mercy delivered him. A revolving light was discovered, which his two charts and book of directions informed him was on the Gannet Rock, and must be left on the starboard in proceeding up the bay. Soon after, quite in accordance with his expectations, he saw another fixed light on the larboard, and began to steer between them, imagining that he would so pro-

ceed up the bay and be off the port of St Andrews by daylight. But there came over him one of those impressions which he always looked upon as a voice from God. Reason and natural inference said "Proceed," but instinct, or should we not rather call it a divine monition, said "Wait." He did so, and when the morning broke the surf was seen all around whitening on rocks and islands, and dangerous reefs. With astonishment at his peril, yet gratitude for his preservation, he made all sail, beating to windward, and by noon was safe from danger. Had he been indifferent to what many would have derided as a foolish fancy, his vessel would have been wrecked. He found that the revolving light was on the coast of Maine, and that no mention whatever was made of it in his charts and books of directions, and that there was no light at all on the Gannet Rock.

At St Andrews he learned that other vessels had been in similar peril, and so wrote at once to the compiler of the charts, begging him to correct his errors immediately, and expressing his conviction that if other captains were equally ready to communicate their observations it would be greatly to the advantage of the seafaring community at large.

At St Andrews Captain March visited the hospital, conversing and praying with its inmates, one of whom, having received severe injuries from a fall whilst intoxicated, sent a message of warning against the snare of intemperance to the crew of the *Huskisson*,

which the captain requested the Rev. —— Maclean, who preached on board that same afternoon, to deliver.

"*Nov.* 7.—It is an ill wind that blows nobody any good. Last Sabbath-day it blew so strong that the ship dragged one of her anchors, in consequence of which we were obliged to re-moor on the Tuesday, when on heaving up the anchor we found that it had got across and hooked a large piece of four-inch birch plank; this being crooked, proved very useful for a top-mast cross-tree. A similar piece was not to be had in St Andrews, as I know, having made previous search. If I had been aware of what the anchor was dragging up from the bottom I should have been more at ease. How little we know what unexpected mercies, trials and crosses may bring! How slow we are to believe that all things work together for good to those who love God!"

On Tuesday the 8th, having dined out with some who disregarded religion, he writes, "I begin to think I have hitherto gone too far in refusing all Sabbath invitations from unconverted people, for I find they are more disposed to hear about religion on that day than on any other. If I could always have such an opportunity of standing up for the truth as I have had this day, I should not hesitate to go again and again.

"Captain Lucy was pleased to say that he had heard it remarked by many captains that my crew was the most orderly and best-behaved in the port; that

it had been observed they were always steady at their work without any swearing or noise. Here the power of God is certainly manifested in restraining them, for the greater part of them continues in an unconverted state. I desire to feel thankful whenever I hear the ways of God well spoken of, and to His name be all the praise."

When mingling with society a quiet vein of humour was always perceptible in his conversation; which enabled him to say, without offence, what from some would have been very differently received. This mental tendency caused him one evening, while at St Andrews, to take a liberty with a text of Scripture, a thing that was very rare with him. Passing down the wharf to his vessel with one of his crew, he saw a drunken man stretched on some timber, and tried to rouse him, but finding him too far gone, observed, as he left him there on his by no means easy couch, "The way of transgressors is hard."

On Tuesday, Nov. 3, the homeward voyage was commenced, during which many were the pleas which he urged upon his crew for yielding themselves to God. One Sabbath he remarked that some of them might imagine that as he was not an ordained minister he had no business to trouble himself about their souls, but he would remind them, that if they thought this they acted with some inconsistency; for when they suffered from any pain or sickness they at once came to him for advice and medicine,

and received them willingly though he had taken out no diploma. Why should they not be equally ready to hear his words of spiritual counsel?

On Saturday, Dec. 12, a sad event occurred, that cast a gloom over all on board. The entry is as follows:—"The wind has been variable and squally, and the weather unsettled for two or three days past. This evening, about twilight, the wind suddenly shifted right aft, when the fore and aft sails were taken in, and while in the act of stowing the jib, I heard the alarming cry of 'A man overboard.' Being near to the helm, I instantly told the man to hard a-port, and luff the ship to wind, and gave orders to cut away the lashings of the jolly-boat, and lower away as fast as possible. I then saw the man about twenty yards from the ship, struggling in the sea, and threw a deal plank towards him, which, however, he failed to lay hold of, not being a good swimmer. A rope was also thrown, but it did not reach him. I shouted to him to keep up and the boat should come in a minute. In a very short space the boat was in the water pulling towards him, but ere it could reach him he sank to rise no more. I now learned that the person was Henry Lankester. While I saw his position, and feared that he would be drowned, I kept lifting up my heart to God on behalf of his soul. The chief mate and three men, after seeking in vain for the body, returned, having risked their own lives owing to the dangerous sea

that was running. At one time the boat was nearly swamped, and filled with water. I desire to be thankful that there was no confusion; on the contrary, all was order, and every person seemed to do their best to save the life of our departed shipmate. Had he been a tolerable swimmer we might have come up with him in time. When I saw him evidently sinking, I said to myself, 'Oh, how should I feel were I in his place?' The boat was scarcely secured before a violent gale overtook us, requiring our utmost exertion to reduce the sails. God seemed to say, 'Will you now hear my voice speaking to you in the storm?' Had this occurred a little earlier the boat with the four hands would, I fear, have been lost. It appears that the immediate cause of Henry Lankester's falling from the jib-boom was the flapping of the sail to windward, as it was caught with the eddy wind. One of the men says that the ship ran over him, which would partly account for his being on the surface of the water so short a time. It was only on the preceding day that he said to the mate, 'How angry the waves look!'"

The next day being Sunday, Captain March sought to impress divine truth on the crew by pointing to the solemn lesson of God's providence, and prayed earnestly that the death of their shipmate might be the means of their spiritual life, and a word of instruction to his bereaved relatives.

Fourteen days of fair wind brought the *Huskisson*

across the Atlantic, and then followed as many days of foul weather, which proved very tantalizing to the men, who expected so soon to enter port; but the captain, although he had special reason for desiring a speedy termination to the voyage, did not murmur at the delay, but wrote on the 23d of December: "The secret of my happiness lies in approving of all God's dealings. This foul wind which now keeps us from our native shore, and from enjoying the society of those we love, is I know all right, therefore the will of the Lord be done." Still the winterly east wind, driving sleet and hail before it, swept down in their teeth, as they sought perseveringly to beat up against it towards the Scilly Islands.

At length they caught sight of the desired haven of refuge, and soon after the pilot was on board. This did not insure safety, for he well-nigh wrecked them, and but for the promptitude and practical wisdom of the captain, the fate of the ship, if not of the crew, would have been sealed.

"At 3 P.M. we were safely moored in Broad Sound, about half a mile from the town of St Mary's. In coming in we had to make several tacks when the ship missed stays, and was very nearly getting upon the rocks. It was nothing but a kind and merciful Providence that caused the ship to wear round with unusual rapidity. The pilot was confused, and called out to let go the anchor; but the anchor did not run, for God had stopped it, knowing that by such an act

the ship must go on shore. Seeing this, I thought I understood the voice, and ordered the men to wear ship. Having set some to square the main-yard and haul aft the jib-sheet, I ran aft and told others to lower the mizzen down and put the helm up, which soon brought the vessel round. If I ever felt thankful in my life for any temporal blessing, it is now that we are so safely secured in a snug harbour during this very bleak and tempestuous weather. I am glad and quiet because He hath brought me into a desired haven. This is a sweet pleasure a landsman knows nothing of. May I praise the Lord more and more for His goodness and wonderful works!

"*Scilly Islands, Dec.* 25.—This is a day that man has appointed to be kept holy, consequently I gave no notice for divine worship; but when noon arrived, the usual time for our Sabbath service, the crew sent to know if they might meet for worship. I was glad of this, and when they assembled I read from Matthew and Luke the record of our Saviour's birth, explaining the usual significance of Christmas Day."

In the evening Captain March gave the crew an astronomical lecture, illustrating "by a candle and two balls the motion of the earth and moon, the cause of eclipses and tides, and showing how we ascertained our longitude at sea by lunar observation;" and then sought to direct the minds of his truly interested audience to the Great Supreme, assuring them that the more they knew of His works, the better they

would understand His nature, and pointing out how ignorance of God was one great cause of rebellion against Him.

On the morning of Sunday, Dec. 27, he worshipped in the town of St Mary's, at the Episcopal and Methodist sanctuaries; and as he was returning on board to dine he was agreeably surprised to learn from the mate "that the crew had been to inquire if they might meet in the cabin for worship;" and permission being granted, two hymns were sung, a chapter was read, and Robert Randal, a pious man, engaged in prayer. The mate was fearful that he had taken a liberty in acceding to their request, but the captain replied, "Would God all the Lord's people were prophets;" telling the mate that he was truly glad to find such a disposition for worship, and hoped it would always be encouraged.

On the 6th of January the east wind ceased, and, in company with some forty other vessels, Captain March left the harbour of refuge, arriving off Bristol on the 8th. Here a letter was awaiting him, which he says "was one of the most comforting letters I ever received."

According to orders, the *Huskisson* proceeded to Sharpness Point, and thence, some of the cargo being discharged to lighten her, and when the ice was sufficiently broken, was towed up the ship canal to Gloucester.

Whilst at Bristol Captain March had given notice

to the owners that he should resign command of the *Huskisson*, and yet it was with much reluctance that he left the good ship that had borne him so bravely through many a storm and peril.

But all shadow of sorrow was dispelled by the happiness that lay before him. It had long been a dawning of hope, and now was brightening into a day of joy.

He was pleased on severing his connection with the Bristol house to receive their hearty thanks for the efficient service he had rendered them during six years. The cargo was said to be the finest that had been landed in the port during many years. One large log, of more than six tons and a quarter, excited the admiration of all passers-by.

It was a somewhat singular providence that at this juncture in his history brought Captain March to Gloucester, and as there he was busied with his secular duties, snatching such opportunities as offered for doing and gaining good, and occupied all the while with an undercurrent of sweet anticipation, he little thought that in years to come that pleasant port and venerable city would be his home; that there his children would grow up about him, that there, though leading the unromantic life of a landsman, he would pass through darker storms and more troubled waters than ever surrounded him on the ocean, and that there at last his soul would pass away to the quietest of all havens.

CHAPTER VIII.

"A Good Thing."

"Whoso findeth a good wife findeth a good thing."—PROV. xviii. 22. (*Septuagint Version.*)

"Marriage hath not more ease than the single state, but less danger; it is more merry and more sad; it is fuller of sorrows and fuller of joys; it lies under more burdens, but is supported by all the strengths of love and charity; and those burdens are delightful."—JEREMY TAYLOR.

"A GOOD THING."

THE hope that had for some time been cherished by Captain March was now realized. On April 8, 1830, he was married to Mary, the only daughter of —— Byles, Esq., of Stowmarket (and sister to Mr Justice Byles.) His attachment was no boyish fancy, but the deep and steady affection of a matured manhood, sanctioned by judgment, and firmly based on esteem. The two hearts were happily united by even closer than conjugal ties. Not only had they sworn to love and cherish each other till death should them part, but they anticipated with a joyful confidence a reunion in another life, when, purged of all the earthly, their relationship should be higher and more blessed. Captain March had said on one occasion he would rather die than marry an unconverted woman, and in anticipation of his approaching union he wrote, "It delights me to think of being united to one who is like-minded with myself, a follower of the Lamb, and of spending an eternity with one who is dear to me as life itself."

From February to May he made no entry in his journal, the arrangements, the travelling, the excite-

ment associated with his marriage, so absorbing both time and thought. One is pleased to see this touch of nature, for the man who can steadily journalize at all times, and on all occasions, must have schooled himself into so precise a regularity as cannot fail in most cases to have a deadening influence on the feelings.

On Thursday, May 20, on the broad Atlantic, seated in his cabin, with his wife by his side, the hurry and bustle of the departure over, there was a calm and leisure time, when he once more took down the journal and made an entry. It was but three months since he last shut the book, yet, in view of the important events and the happy experience that had intervened, it must have appeared a far longer period. The vessel which carried the captain and his bride was, with singular appropriateness, called the *Arcadia*, and was bound for New York, having on board one hundred and fifty emigrants, and a cargo of iron. For only a single incident of the outward voyage shall we here find place. It was one of those remarkable deliverances which confirmed Captain March's faith in the Divine assurance that "the angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear Him and delivereth them."

The writer received the account from the lips of the captain, and has found in the journal confirmatory details of the narrow escape. On Sunday, June 27, the *Arcadia* was in the vicinity of Long Island, the passengers seated in groups about the

deck rejoicing in the prospect of a speedy arrival at their destination. At about 2 P.M. Captain March calculated that the ship could stand on the same tack for at least an hour longer without risk, and then went below to read in his favourite commentator Matthew Henry.

Overcome by heat and fatigue he fell asleep. Suddenly it seemed as if a hand touched him and he awoke. There was no one in the cabin, there was no unusual sound on deck. Looking at his watch he found that the hour was more than expired, and immediately hurried up the gangway and shouted, "'Bout ship!" A thick fog had arisen, so that now no land was to be seen. As he was taking the helm from the man, and putting it a-lee, a cry came from the bows of "Breakers a head!" He strained his eyes, and, though he saw nothing through the enveloping mist, could distinctly hear the sound of the surf on the shore. All eyes were fixed on him, there was a dead silence, which he was enabled in another moment to break by saying, "All's right, the ship's about." A few minutes more and the vessel would have struck, and in all probability have become a total wreck. In relating this circumstance, Captain March always devoutly acknowledged the providence of God, which interposed in so marvellous a way to arouse him at that critical moment when many lives and much property were in jeopardy.

During their stay at New York Captain March and

his wife received kindly hospitality from many Christian friends, and were much interested in the signs that everywhere met them of the extraordinary energy of our transatlantic cousins. The Sabbath-days were spent on shore, where the means of grace were plentiful, and the Bethel flag was not hoisted on the *Arcadia* save once or twice on the week-days, when ministers from the city addressed congregations averaging two hundred in number.

From New York he steered for St Andrews; and passing through the dangerous channel that runs between Nantucket Shoals and St George's Bank, where the tide rippled and boiled over the shallows on either hand, arrived in a few days in the familiar Bay of Fundy. On reaching his destination he proceeded to take in a cargo of timber. Whilst so engaged he one day discovered that the cook, a stalwart and violent Irishman, had broken open a passenger's chest, and stolen the contents. Though he denied the charge, the missing goods were found in his possession; and ere he had time to make use of his undoubted physical powers, Captain March clapped a pair of handcuffs on his wrists and led him ashore for trial. Unwillingly were such measures resorted to; but the commander of a heterogeneous crew, none of whom he may have seen before the commencement of the voyage, must be decisive in repressive measures, or it would be impossible to maintain discipline. The man was condemned to two months' imprisonment,

with hard labour, and during his incarceration Captain March wrote him a faithful and kind letter, in which he urged him to adopt a different course for the future—one that would be more honouring to God and less unpleasant to himself.

Returning to England, as a gale swept over them —imperilling not only his own life, but that of his beloved wife—he debated in his mind as to whether, now that he was married, he should not seek some occupation on shore. "Yet," he says, "is it right to give up this employment, when so few who command ships serve God?" So he waited, ere he changed his mode of life, for clearer providential intimation. From this hesitation as to the path he should pursue, it is not to be inferred that he was growing weary of a seafaring life. So far from this being the case, we read, under date of

"*Tuesday, Oct.* 12.—During the past four days it has been blowing a gale of wind from the westward, which has brought us upwards of 600 miles on our way home. I speak of home, but I know of none other than my ship, especially while my dear wife continues with me."

By the 25th of the month he knew that he must be nearing land; but as the sky had become obscured, he was unable for four days to determine his exact position. As he sat in the cabin musing on the analogy between the navigation of the seas and the course of him who is seeking to guide his life towards

heaven's port, and thinking how essential is a sight of the Sun of Righteousness to the Christian, that he may take observations therefrom, ascertain his position, and learn his deflections, a voice cried out, "A light on the larboard bow!" which proved to be that on Cape Clear. It was cheering news to all, affording even surer knowledge of the whereabouts of the vessel than if they had seen sun or moon. So, often, the captain found that earthly human lights, which had been kindled from a celestial fire, afforded both guidance and comfort.

Bristol reached in safety, and the cargo discharged, the *Arcadia* was chartered to fetch timber for Government from Savannah, and Captain March, having consented to take charge of her again, sailed, with his wife, towards the end of November.

Whilst returning from St Andrews he had read various works, physiological and argumentative, on the subject of total abstinence, and his mind being ever open to conviction, after a careful consideration of the question he determined to discontinue the use of alcoholic beverages. He next pondered his duty towards the crew in reference to this important matter, and conceiving that what was good for him must be beneficial to them, especially as many of their class were prone to excess, he wrote on

"*Friday, Nov.* 19.—My mind has been much exercised about going to sea without any spirituous liquors. Some of the crew who are about to sail with me

are willing to fall in with my plan. Tea and sugar will be given them in lieu. This will be making a great stand against the customs and usages of all ships, and I sometimes fear the weight of such a cross. May God in His great mercy enable me to do what is right in His sight."

Again, on Saturday 27th, he says, "After much prayer and thought I have concluded to go to sea without the usual quantity of spirituous liquor, the crew having consented to receive tea and sugar instead.

"Most people think I shall fail in my undertaking, but I have committed the matter to God. I feel persuaded more labour will be obtained from the men, which will more than compensate for the extra cost."

"*Tuesday 30th, Sunset.*—The crew signed the articles with a clause inserted expressing their agreement to the new regulation. Most seriously do I commend this, my endeavour, to Him who alone can cause some good to come from it. Some have laughed at the idea, and the devil has already been at work to oppose it; but greater is He who is for me than all those who are against me."

The following Sabbath was a day of anxiety.

"*Sunday, Dec.* 5.—About noon we had a shift of wind from S.W. to N.W. At two, just as I was thinking of making more sail, (being under close reefed top-sails,) the wind having become more favour-

able, it freshened, and in a few minutes it blew a complete gale, which as quickly increased to a hurricane. All effort to take in sail being now useless, I gave orders to cut them away that we might save the masts and the ship. Those which had been furled were blowing adrift, and no man dared to venture his life near them; indeed it was next to impossible to do any work aloft except by knives and axes. The scene was now truly awful; the sea became white with foam, which blew over us like heavy rain, the ship trembled like a leaf, and the masts threatened every minute to go over the side. The roar of the wind was such that no human voice could be heard, except when speaking in each other's ears, and most of our work was done by signs. It appeared as if God was about to destroy us by the breath of His mouth, for there had not been the least warning of the tempest in the face of the sky. It was so unusual that we all wondered where the wind came from, none of us having ever witnessed anything like it before. A jib only new the day before was torn from the stay with all its hanks, and was instantly cut away to save the bowsprit. The fore-top sail and top-sail were also cut away to save the masts and the ship; both top-gallant sails would have been also cut away, but no one cared to venture so high, and the wind soon cleared the yards. I tried to wear the ship before the wind, but found she was unmanageable.

"About four o'clock, when the wreck was cleared, I went to the crew in the forecastle, and told them I was not come to frighten, but to pray with them, for we had now nothing else to do. I read and explained the first chapter of Jonah, and then offered prayer, after which the second mate broke out praying without my asking him. I then encouraged them all to put up their petitions to God after the example of the heathen ship's company we had just been reading about. I told them I felt much strengthened and comforted, as I thought that I had an interest in Christ, and hoped that they might possess the same assurance, and said that if the ship-load of gold were offered me I would not exchange my hope for it. We parted after singing 'Praise God from whom all blessings flow.'

"*Midnight.*—The hurricane still in full fury.

"*Monday 6th, Daylight.*—The violence of the wind has somewhat abated, but it is still blowing with great force. During my absence on deck from my dear wife she thought the ship must be shaken to pieces, and was grieved with the apprehension that we should not see each other before death. Sometimes she felt calm and resigned, and then again was distressed by the great enemy. God certainly has heard our prayers in a wonderful manner, which I hope to remember and record to the praise of His blessed name.

"*Tuesday 7th.*—The gale continues to abate. Set

the try-sails; by sunset got some of the wreck cleared and set the top-sails. Oh that the goodness of God may lead us all to repentance. This morning the ship put on a melancholy appearance with her tattered sails and rigging, a specimen of God's judgment and mercy. May we praise Him for both."

Spiritual fruit did not at once appear as the result of this alarming event and the lessons which Captain March sought to draw from it, but in the spring of the next year he made an entry which shows that good did follow:—"Last week I had some interesting conversation with one of the sailors, who seems to be truly awakened. The first thing that set him thinking seriously was the hurricane that overtook the ship on the 5th of December last. He was then struck with his unfitness for death. I remember thinking at the time that good would result from such a scene. The man says he enjoys our daily worship, and feels thankful to God for having brought him to such a ship."

With "tattered sails and crippled masts,"—such is the captain's expression—the *Arcadia* made slow progress, and it was not till January 28, 1831, that the low-lying coast of South Carolina came in sight. Twenty-one miles up the river, that winds fringed with reeds, through many a swampy rood, they anchored opposite the town of Savannah. At once accursed slavery roused Captain March's indignation. The state laws compelled him to send his black cook

to prison while the ship remained in port, lest the presence and conversation of a free man of colour should excite revolt in his oppressed brethren. As the master of the *Arcadia* visited the rice plantations that lay in the midst of marsh land, he sighed to find that the dwellings of the slaves were miserable, windowless huts, begrimed with smoke and dirt, enough to degrade any human creatures who should be so unfortunate as to tenant them; and noting the fact in his journal, he says, "I wonder when God will roll away the reproach of this part of mankind." It has taken more than thirty years since those words were penned to bring about that crisis which plunged the United States into the sanguinary and terrible war that has resulted, through the Divine Providence, in removing one of the foulest blots that ever dishonoured the escutcheon of a great people.

Captain March visited some of the slave schools, and found that though the children were taught to answer questions, they were not allowed to read. The following extract indicates what, through the Divine blessing, has in some cases been the effect of slavery on the spiritual condition of those who are subject to its wrongs:—

"Had some pleasing conversation with a black stower, a pious member of a Baptist Church. He evidently enjoys religion. He said that the only good which he could see as resulting from slavery was that many became Christians who would have been irre-

ligious if they were free, for their hard masters drove them to Christ, as had been the case with himself. He is a man of very good understanding, but unable to read. He thinks that since the law was enacted that prohibits slaves being taught to read, more learn than formerly, for now they secretly pay half a dollar per month for instruction. His son, who is now on board, did so when a boy, paying for it out of the money he earned. He himself has been sold five times, owing to the death of his owners. Once he fetched 750 dollars, but the last time he was sold only 450. He is now above fifty years of age, which makes him of less value.

"We have now three black labourers (slaves) employed on board; the head man, Davy, seems to possess true religion. This evening I saw and heard them at prayer; Davy engaged, and it appeared to be the language of the heart, such as would be pleasing to God. I did feel glad to see those three sable-faced men on their knees in the hold."

If slavery was over-ruled for the soul's good of some who were subjected to it—and we know that "all things work together for good to those who love God," —it had a most painful influence on the religious condition of the dominant classes, for in their churches Captain March was struck with the deadness and apparent insincerity that characterized the services. The good seed of the kingdom had been sown by Whitfield in 1740, but was dwarfed and blighted in

its development—it could not flourish side by side with the accursed thorn of slavery.

A survey of the ship being made, which was rendered necessary by the hurricane through which she had passed, main-mast, fore-masts and bowsprit were condemned. This involved considerable repairs, which the captain had to superintend, and necessitated his going into the forests to expedite the procuring of masts. Passing along a level road by rice and cotton fields, and through dense woods, tenanted by black buzzards, blue-birds, pigeons, and rice-birds, admiring the luxuriant growths, he came to the spot where the yellow pines were felled. The main-mast was four feet across at the stump, and a picturesque team of sixteen mules and four yoke of oxen was required to draw it into Savannah.

At last the new masts were got in, on which the captain says, "We begin again to look like a ship." When the vessel was fully laden with her cargo of timber, and was about to leave the river, sickness broke out on board; the captain and four of his men were seized with fever, and had to be sent on shore, whilst the poor black cook, who had only just been released from prison, died in the hospital. In the other cases, however, disease yielded, under the Divine blessing, to the remedies employed, and all was once more ready for sailing. But not yet were their anxieties ended, for the deeply laden vessel touched more han once on the shoals inside the bar, where, if she had

remained till fall of tide she would, to use the pilot's expression, have "left her bones." It would be difficult for us to realize the relief of all on board when the vessel was once more on the deep and buoyant ocean, leaving fast behind her the land of swamps, and fever, and slavery.

On the 9th of June she was moored off Chatham. As Captain March was paying off the crew, one, and only one, of the sailors objected to the plan of working without grog, "He was sure it would never do *him* any harm." That very night he got drunk, was robbed of all his wages, and had to make his way on foot towards Bristol, his home, supporting himself on the road by begging. When he reached Bath he was so footsore that he wrote to his wife to come and fetch him the rest of the way. "A plain proof," says Captain March, "that grog was *not* good for *him*."

In the beginning of July Captain March set sail for Archangel, but his wife was unable to accompany him. Sorrowfully he bade her farewell. "We have now been upwards of twelve months together on this ship, (the *Arcadia*,) during which time I have had as much happiness as I ever expected in this life. May the Lord sanctify our separation and grant us to meet again, and lead me into some situation where we may not be obliged to part until death divide us."

On Sunday, the 10th of the month, as they were passing by the coast of Norway, he told the crew, as

he was addressing them at divine service, that he had many years ago been in a terrific gale off that same perilous shore, when, as all expected every moment to be their last, he would have given the world to have known the comforts of religion. Since then he had been in equal danger, but, through the grace of God, knew what it was to be supported by trust in Him, and so he urged on his hearers that godliness which alone can make a man truly brave and happy. By the 13th the *Arcadia* arrived in the regions of constant daylight. Sleep was very difficult where the curtain of darkness was not drawn, and at midnight the captain would take the meridian altitude of the sun, and read and write by the sickly light that overspread sky and sea.

At this time he adopted the most excellent plan of retiring in the middle of the day for a brief period of prayer. By such means the good resolutions of the morning were recollected, and a fresh spiritual impulse gathered, that might enable him to complete the day in the fear of the Lord: so he imitated the Psalmist's determination, "At evening, and morning, and at noon will I pray." At the commencement of this voyage he began to read the Gospel of St Luke at family worship, offering brief expositions as he proceeded. These remarks were not the purely extemporaneous platitudes that too often fall from the lips of those who, without forethought, seek to comment on Scripture, but they were the result of careful meditation. It cost

him more than an hour every day to prepare for this little service, but he considered the time well spent.

The coast of Lapland impressed Captain March as being both dreary and dangerous. No tree or house was visible; the only signs of life were the Fin whales that occasionally showed themselves on the surface of the water, and the screaming sea-gulls that wheeled about the dark and lowering rocks. "A terrible coast for a lee shore," thought all; but they were brought safely past it, and down into the White Sea.

Continuing to keep a southerly course, they were once more in a latitude of sunset, the short night beginning at ten o'clock. The coast on either hand became visible, a sandy soil, with here and there a house and a lone cross, many of which were erected by becalmed pilots and seamen. Speaking with a homeward-bound brig, they learned the unwelcome news that the cholera was rife at Archangel, 1040 of the inhabitants having already been carried off; it was also said to have found its way amongst the shipping. On their arrival they found these reports but too true. The medical men were much perplexed, they were convinced that the disease was not contagious, for they themselves and the attendants of the afflicted seemed generally to escape, but how to treat or check it they knew not. Captain March, leaving himself and his crew in the hands of the Almighty Father, was calm and prepared.

The means of grace at Archangel were not such as

he could profit by, so each Sunday he had public worship on board his own vessel, and many strangers attended. The voice of God, speaking through the terrible plague with which the neighbourhood was visited, drove many who were habitually indifferent to religion to anxious thought of a future life; and it may be that it was God's especial providence that sent amongst the seamen who at that time were tarrying at the port, one so able and ready to sow the seed of the kingdom in hearts that were softened by the Divine judgments. Some of the captains and mates, and many of the men in the vessels lying off Archangel, and one-seventh of the population of the town, fell before the mysterious malady. Not one died on board the *Arcadia;* several were seized with alarming symptoms, but the blessing of God on the prompt administration of medicine wrought their cure. All hands were heartily glad when the vessel had completed her cargo of deals, and sailed from a spot replete with danger and sorrowful association.

On through the unfamiliar Polar Seas they were borne rapidly homewards, lighted at night-time by the aurora borealis, which stretched an arch of glory on the northern horizon. Less brilliant but more welcome lights at length told them of their proximity to English soil, and the day dawned that again showed them the mist-covered coast that borders the Bristol Channel. As the vessel lay in tiresome quarantine in Kingroad, a letter came to the cap-

tain that filled his heart with a new and tender joy, and made him still more impatient at the delay. It was written by his beloved wife, and informed him that God had given them a little daughter. As soon as the days of durance were over he hastened to Stowmarket, where his two dearest ones were staying. Here the child was dedicated to God in baptism, of which he says, "I enjoyed the service, and believe that God will adopt her into His family; and why should I not, when His promise is to the seed of His servants?"

In teaching in the Sabbath school, addressing the scholars and telling his fellow Christians of the Lord's doings in other lands, and of the darkness also that called for the effort and prayer of the privileged English, he occupied his leisure time whilst still in Suffolk. As he was thus engaged, news reached him of the Bristol riots, in which the lowest ruffians of the populace, for purposes of mischief and plunder, broke open three jails, liberating the prisoners, destroyed the Bishop's palace, razed to the ground several toll-houses, and burned down two sides of Queen's Square, including the very house in which, had he been at Bristol, he would have been lodging. A gentleman and lady of his acquaintance, residents in the square, were obliged with their infant child to fly at three in the morning to a friend's house for shelter and protection. The authorities of the city, paralyzed with alarm, did nothing to check the outbreak, and for a time the

lovers of disorder exulted in their unrestrained violence. When the captain and his wife arrived again in Bristol and saw the ruin of Queen's Square, the fire still smouldering within the blackened walls, they thanked a kind Providence that had kept them from the danger to which they would have been exposed, had they returned a few days earlier. In remembrance of that terrible time we Englishmen may surely congratulate ourselves on the fact that, though popular gatherings and demonstrations are more frequent than at any former period, they are unaccompanied by the outrages which marked the Bristol riots.

The journal, after briefly noticing the foregoing facts, breaks off for some weeks, and is resumed when the *Arcadia* is off the Azores, bound for New Orleans. The captain is accompanied by his wife and child. It was only on the very afternoon of his sailing that he decided to take them with him. He had feared the effects of a sea voyage on both; but as Bristol was still in an unsettled state, and cholera had penetrated England at various points, he thought they would be safer with him in the vessel. When fifty-four days out from Bristol, he anchored off the mouth of the Mississippi, the low mud-banks covered with shrubs, seen every now and then through a break in the rain-clouds, wore a dreary aspect, and the lead-coloured pelicans that flew hither and thither seemed quite in keeping with the scene. Nor was it remarkably encouraging, as they expected to return from New

Orleans heavily laden, to see no less than six ships aground on the bar.

On Tuesday, March 1st, as a boat was being lowered for the captain to board a steam-tug, one of the falls parted and two men fell overboard—Robert Randal and Robert Valence. The former, who had sailed with the captain in the *Huskisson*, and was considered by him to be a man of true godliness, manifested complete self-possession, and endeavoured to cheer up his struggling companion as the boat, half full of water, was being propelled towards him; but Valence, although he could swim, seemed paralyzed with fear in the prospect of death, and ere help reached him sank to rise no more. The crew remembered with solemnity of feeling that that very morning the deceased seaman had vowed that he would never more sail in a religious ship. His words were too true. At evening worship the captain observed that their late shipmate now knew the value of religion, if he was in heaven rejoicing in its possession; if in the abode of sorrow, mourning that now it was for ever beyond his reach.

A steam-tug took the *Arcadia* slowly up the one hundred and fifteen miles of river that intervene between the Mississippi bar and New Orleans; the opposing current and the tangled driftwood greatly retarding their course, they were enabled to gain a full view of the sugar plantations, which stretched on either hand down to the water's edge. Mrs March

was glad to land at New Orleans with her infant; but low-lying as it is, many parts being beneath the level of the Mississippi, both she and the child suffered much from ill health, and were compelled to return again to the vessel. The river water, of which all had to partake, caused considerable sickness amongst the crew, and proved almost fatal to the little girl, whose life appeared for some time to hang upon a thread. It is very touching to read the entries at this period, that show how the father's heart was wrung within him. He wrote on one occasion, after having seen her pain without being able to alleviate it: "I never felt so much before, as I have done this day, at the suffering of a human being. I prayed that God would either release her from her anguish or take her to Himself. O Lord, I feel *I* deserve such punishment, but what hath this lamb done. Show mercy and pity, and send relief."

Whilst beseeching that she might be spared, he yet expressed his willingness to resign her if the Lord willed, feeling it would be better by far that she should enter heaven as an infant than live to come short of God's glory. Thus we find that this resolute and brave man possessed much tenderness of feeling. A love to the divine quickened his affection for the human, and in turn his fondness for his little child helped him to realise the goodness and compassion of God, who "like as a father pitieth his children, pitieth them that fear him."

At New Orleans the wretched blight of slavery was seen resting on all things; even the ministers of the gospel trafficked in their fellow-creatures, and the argument of the apostle must to any thoughtful mind have seemed very conclusive as to the sincerity of their religion—"If a man love not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God, whom he hath not seen?"

The best discourse to which the captain listened while in New Orleans was by a Roman Catholic priest, his remarks on which are evidence of a somewhat rare freedom from bigotry.

"*Sunday, April* 8, 1832.—Went to a Roman Catholic chapel, and heard the Rev. Mr M—— preach a delightful sermon on the joy experienced over returning sinners. He spoke of the care and watchfulness of Christ over his sheep, and illustrated it in a pleasing manner. The subject was divided into two parts—the goodness of God in seeking to bring sinners to repentance, and the influence this Divine condescension should have on our conduct. I have heard that the priest is really a pious man—he certainly preached like one. Two bits of the beast only appeared—doing penance, and making atonement with sighs and tears; yet he did not exclude the blood of Christ."

The captain and his wife, as they were returning to England, were full of anxiety, as with alternate hopes and fears they watched over their delicate child; but

when they approached their native shores, she improved wonderfully.

On Wednesday, May 30, they were sailing along the southern coast of England towards Cowes, where orders would be received as to the destination of the cargo. All were in good spirits when the vessel passed through the Needles and anchored off the picturesque Isle of Wight. Here they had to wait two days, and two pleasant days they were for the captain and his wife, who strolled together through the sweet neighbourhood, the flowers decking every field and hedgerow, and the familiar notes of British songbirds sounding from every bush and tree.

On Friday he received directions to proceed to Antwerp, and so had to part with his wife and child, for another voyage would at that time have proved hazardous to them both. He felt the separation keenly. "At 4 P.M. I put the dearest earthly treasures I have on board the steamboat for Southampton and Bristol, leaving them under the care of my faithful black steward, Tom. It was like cutting off my right arm. Oh that God may grant me some situation on shore, so that I may not have to endure this great pain of parting! I returned on board to my deserted and solitary cabin, and endeavoured to commit them to the heavenly Father, praying that the trial might be for our souls' good."

From this time he began seriously to contemplate a change in his vocation; not that he loved the sea less,

but his new ties laid increasing hold upon him. With a heavy heart he weighed anchor, passing up the Solent towards Holland, and was soon in the tortuous Scheldt, working his way to Antwerp as the tide permitted, and viewing with interest the embankments, dwellings, and fields of the industrious folk who live below the level of the sea, his heart all the while looking back. At Antwerp, though there was much to absorb in the preparations that were everywhere making for the contest between Belgium and Holland, though the tomb and paintings of Rubens had considerable interest for the captain, there was a circumstance connected with the spiritual welfare of one of his crew that especially engrossed his attention, and led him to have painful associations through the rest of his life with that time and place. James Nichols, who, he had hoped, was converted by his instrumentality, was discovered by Randal, a pious messmate, to have fallen into deplorable immorality.

"*Sunday, June* 17.—After dinner, whilst reading one of Whitfield's sermons, Randal came to inform me that James Nichols had fallen into gross sin. At my request he called him, when we both told him of his sins, part of which he denied, and part confessed. We wept over him much, admonished him, and advised him to go into the woods or fields for a day or two, with a crust of bread, to fast, pray, 'repent,' and do his 'first works.' We then knelt down and prayed with and for him. Poor Randal was so over-

come with tears that he could not proceed. I attempted to engage, but found myself in almost a similar predicament. However, we did, I believe, succeed in commending our fallen brother to the grace and mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ. It is now about eighteen months since I had reason to hope that he was turned from darkness to light. He has frequently caused me to shed tears of joy, but now mine eyes are swollen with tears of grief. O Lord, save him!"

Soon after parting company with this unhappy man, the captain wrote him as follows:—

"There was a time when I could have addressed you as my dear brother in the Lord, but your late conduct forbids my now doing so. I would that you had never done anything to forfeit the Christian love and esteem I had for you. I cannot let you go without once more warning you to flee from the wrath to come, which I do from love to your soul. Your ingratitude to me as an earthly and spiritual friend I pass over in silence, but what is your sin against that God who has graciously cared for you up to the present moment? The hours which you should have spent in refreshing yourself with sleep you devoted to 'revelling and banqueting,'—to unfitting yourself for prayer and communion with God. Your body, which I had hoped was the temple of God, you have defiled. I beseech of you to repent, and do your first works, lest Christ come upon you with his fierce wrath, and

destroy you without remedy with an everlasting destruction. Remember whence you are fallen; the wicked are triumphing, the ways of righteousness are evil spoken of, on your account. How greatly, greatly have you dishonoured Christ. God only knows what tears of grief and sorrow I daily shed over you. Still, I would hold out encouragement for your return. David and Peter transgressed; they repented, broke off their sins, and were pardoned. May you do likewise. Christ is ready and willing to receive you; seek Him while He may be found. One more request I make, that you will write to me in about twelve months, and let me know the state of mind you are then in. I have spoken to Captain Livingstone about you, and said what was in your favour, and nothing against you. To the grace and mercy of the Lord Jesus Christ I again commend you. Farewell. Your friend and well-wisher,

"CHARLES MARCH."

A short and somewhat unsatisfactory answer was speedily returned; but three months later the captain was comforted and filled with hope on receiving the subjoined letter:—

"*September* 15, 1832.

"DEAR SIR,—I have took this in hand to let you know that I am well, hopen to find you and yours in the same. O sir, I write this with sorrowful heart to

think what I had done. O sir, fear took hold of me to think that I was once in the way, and then to fall into sin again. I feared that the Lord would give me up to myself for ever, so I ought to praise the Lord for His goodness to me that He has not cut me down in my sin. I may say as David did in the 51st Psalm and in the 32d. Day and night I have had no rest for the sin that I have committed against God; but with prayer to God, I hope that the Lord has spoke peace to my soul again. O sir, I once thought that this would never happen to me, but it was for the want of prayer to God. Oh that God may give me grace to hold on and endure to the end! Sir, the death of my father never give me so much concern as the leaving of you. Oh that I could get with you again! Many a time have I thought on your words that I would repent goen away from you. My very soul is pained to think on my ways. I will come back again if you will write to me.

"Write to me before the 20th of September; please write to Leith to the care of my mother in King Street. This letter give a good deal of thought how to write to you, but I hope that you will forgive me and pray for me. I do not forget to pray for you and yours, that the Lord may keep you from the world. I prayed unto the Lord that he would direct me to write the thoughts in this letter with the feelings of my heart.

"And, sir, if we never meet again in this world,

oh that we may meet in heaven, where sin will never part us again, and may the blessing of God rest upon your soul and yours for what you have done to me.

"No more at present, but remaining your humble servant, JAMES NICHOLS."

From Antwerp it was necessary for Captain March to proceed to Onega, and that without touching at England; so coasting along the dear familiar shores he steered for Arctic regions. Scarborough with its castle-crowned headland was sighted, and they were again near the land off the coast of Scotland. Says the journal of this date:—

"Yesterday and to-day we have been running along the coast of Scotland, which I recollect well, although I have not seen it for twenty years. The thought of this makes me feel old. At that period I was faithfully serving the devil. O Lord, forgive my former rebellion against Thee, and accept praise for enabling me to view my past life with such abhorrence. May I yet repent of it more and more, and be led by Thy grace and Spirit into a life of constant obedience and self-denial."

Many would have considered him at the period to which he refers a most excellent and amiable young fellow; so to all appearance he was, but he now knew that God, who looks on the heart, saw that his thoughts and affections were not in these earlier days loyal to Him, but that, absorbed in things of a tem-

poral interest, he forgot the claims and love of the Saviour.

It was a dreary voyage. In the latitude of continual sunlight the day was ghastly and the night sleepless. A bitterly cold wind bringing snow and sleet beat against them, retarding their progress. Nor was the cheerfulness of the crew increased when one of their number, William Wingate, was seized with serious illness. The captain cared for the health both of his body and soul, but was pained to find his efforts apparently unsuccessful. Sad unconcern characterized the dying man. On the afternoon preceding his death he seemed a little better, and sat on deck a-while, but the next day breathed his last. The captain read over the deceased seaman some extracts from the burial service of the Church of England, but says in his journal that he dared not use it all, lest, by expressing confident assurance of the salvation of one who died in evident unconcern about his soul, he should blind the minds of his unbelieving shipmates. Sewn up in canvas and weighted with stones at the feet the body was committed to the deep. With mournful plunge the remains of William Wingate passed from view, and the unconscious waves sported over his grave, whence he shall not emerge until the sea give up her dead.

At Onega Captain March was delighted to meet with a zealous Christian, Captain Corvie, the master of the brig *Amity*. On alternate Sundays they had

divine worship on board each other's vessels, the two crews uniting in the services.

On Friday, August 3, a boat containing the master of the *Duncombe* and four of his men was swamped as it was returning from shore to the vessel. The week following it was discovered on Kio island with the body of one of the men in her. The remains of the unfortunate seaman were interred with a public funeral, conducted by Captains Corvie and March. Some Russian officers and the captains of the four English vessels in port, with part of their crews, attended, and the two servants of God, who had been set apart for spiritual labour by no other ordination than the Divine, sought to make the service for the dead a means of grace for the living.

The load of deals completed, the *Arcadia* set sail for England, but all on board were concerned to find that she was "crank, listing five streaks in a moderate breeze with a weather tide." This was partly occasioned by the fact of dry deals being stowed at the bottom and green at the top. However, the homeward passage was successfully accomplished, and on Sunday, October 14, soon after divine service was concluded, the welcome cry of "Land ho!" called all hands on deck. There, directly before them on the verge of the horizon, lay that same Lundy Isle which had lured Charles March to sea when a boy, had been often passed and repassed in his journeyings to and fro, and which now seemed to speak of home

and rest as on the tranquil Sabbath afternoon he completed his last voyage. Yes, his last voyage, save that which all must take from the familiar shores of life into the unknown spaces of eternity.

The day after his landing, a second child, a son, was born to him, which proved a new cord to moor him to his home. That he might be spared the separations from his wife that had been so painful, and especially that he might exercise that parental oversight, and exert that constant but often unconscious influence for good on his little ones, which more or less emanates from the life of every truly Christian father, he resigned his captaincy of the *Arcadia*, determining henceforth to live with his family. Thus ended what would be considered by many the most eventful portion of his life. He had sown beside all waters, spoken of religion repeatedly to many crews, distributed the gospel of Jesus in a variety of tongues, and had been a witness to the truth wherever he went, hoisting the Bethel flag at the mast-head, maintaining a consistent life, and aiming to be a living epistle in which men might read the sacred name of Christ. But when at this time he looked around for the fruit of his labour there was little to be seen, and he felt humbled before God. Yet this is not to be wondered at.

> ". . . the best men doing their best
> Know, peradventure, least of what they do."

His efforts had not, like those of the settled pastor,

been concentrated in one spot, where the young germs could be watched as they ripened into full maturity, and the rich harvest be gathered in with joyful eagerness, but here and there on the ocean highways he dropped the seed, and passing on, knew not of its after history. Yet when at last the issue of all earnest service for Christ is seen, and when the scattered work of the individual Christian is viewed as a whole, he, the outline of whose life we are tracing, will doubtless be found the glad possessor of heavenly treasure, and receive the commendation of those who have aimed at faithfulness in their stewardship. Though little obvious good followed his labours for others, the effort to be a blessing to his fellow-men proved an advantage to his own heart. The assurance that "whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap," has a large fulfilment even in this life. Habits of religious thought, patient endurance, quiet trust in God, and persevering industry, were the spiritual capital with which he commenced a new career, and brought him a happiness that was manifest in his conversation and inscribed on his countenance. As the vicissitudes of this world sweeten for the bliss of heaven, so the difficulties and dangers he encountered while passing "to and fro," eminently qualified him for the enjoyment and wise use of "life on shore."

CHAPTER IX.

Life on Shore.

"In a service which Thy will appoints
There are no bonds for me;
For my inmost heart is taught the 'truth'
That makes Thy children 'free;'
And a life of self-renouncing love,
Is a life of liberty."

—A. L. WARING.

LIFE ON SHORE.

FEW who know Gloucester well can fail to entertain an affection for that venerable city. Its signs of antiquity stand side by side with all the interest of a modern port. The eye rests now on mediæval architecture, and now on recent warehouses; at one moment the sound of cathedral bells is heard, at the next the merry shout of the sailor; you pass from Gothic aisles to the margin of the basin, where in utmost tranquillity vessels sleep that a short while since from various quarters of the world came leaping over the crested waves.

From the brow of Robin Hood's hill on a summer's afternoon, the prospect is indeed picturesque; gleaming lines of rail curve away to where the city stands clustered round the cathedral tower, which with patriarchal grandeur looks down benignantly on the lowlier homesteads. Yonder, rising above roofs and trees, are tapering masts, which set you wondering how the vessels to which they belong could possibly find their way into the heart of that English landscape, for no glimpse of sea is visible, and only an occasional flash of light shows where the Severn winds on its tortu-

ous course, or the ship-canal pursues its directer way to Sharpness Point. To left and right are undulations of field and woodland, while as a background to the whole scene the Malvern hills rise with their clearly-defined and almost fantastic outlines.

Here Captain March was destined to spend the remainder of his days in a cheerful and useful activity. He did not at once, however, on resigning the *Arcadia*, take up his residence at Gloucester, but choosing a house at Bristol, looked round for some suitable and congenial employment. A ship agency first presented itself, but he found that the principles on which it had been conducted were such as he could not conscientiously countenance; and as there was little chance of making it remunerative if he altered the style of procedure, he at once put it out of the question. Next a partnership with a ship-broker was offered him, but not being satisfied with the religious character of the gentleman with whom he would be so closely associated, and believing that the apostle's words, "be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers," applied quite as much to business connections as to matrimonial alliances, he declined this also. His attention was next directed to the wholesale tobacco trade, and as he saw some good men engaged in it he thought he could not err in being employed in one of its branches; but when he learned that the more distress there was in the country the more the tobacco trade flourished, that

bad times for others were good times for the tobacconists, he became convinced that the trade was mainly supported by the abuse, not the use of the article. He did not blame those who thought it right to gain their livelihood or make their wealth in such a manner,—all he knew was that he could not do it conscientiously, and he was not unmindful of the teaching of the apostle, "To him that esteemeth anything to be unclean, to him it is unclean," and "he that doubteth is condemned."

After this he was offered a partnership with a godly man who was a brewer. "The prospect," he wrote, "as far as money matters were concerned, was flattering, but my conscience was not easy about it, since I believe that many brewers are supported by the vices of mankind, and all appear to me to share in the evil more or less where there is no distinction made as to customers."

Thus again his temporal interest gave way to his sense of right. Never does the writer remember Captain March to have spoken a harsh or censorious word about brewers,—he simply refused to have anything to do with their trade. They might be no more responsible for the abuse of alcoholic beverages, than is a cutler for the wounds a man may inflict upon himself with a knife purchased at his shop, but he shrank from being in any way an instrument in providing what through immoderate use has proved the curse of many a home, the blight of many a life.

It was about this time that the following letter was

written to Messrs Baring Brothers & Co., which is interesting as detailing Captain March's experience of the advantage of withholding "grog" as a beverage from seamen.

"BRISTOL, *Oct.* 30, 1833.

"GENTLEMEN,—Although a stranger to you, I cannot refrain from offering my sincere congratulations on your laudable intention. I perceive, by an extract from the *Christian Advocate*, that it is your intention to fit out a ship for the China trade, on which no spirituous liquors will be allowed.

"As this system is but little known in England, I trust you will excuse the liberty I thus take in addressing you. Believing that you will meet with discouragements, as I have done, in attempting to break through a baneful, long-established habit, I beg to state for your information and encouragement, that I have performed four voyages in the *Arcadia*, where no spirituous liquors were offered as a beverage; the result proved highly satisfactory. The men kept steadily at their work, peace and tranquillity reigned on board, whilst in some ships anarchy prevailed until desertion or imprisonment put a stop to it.

"In March 1831, while at Savannah, two English captains came on board to inquire how I governed my crew, the sight was so uncommon to witness them constantly at their work. At this port I had to new mast the ship, and load with a cargo of pitch pine

timber, which was very heavy work, and all accomplished without grog. I laboured hard myself on purpose to try if human nature could endure it without injury—during the time drinking nothing but water, tea, and coffee; my thirst was not nearly so great as when I was accustomed to drink diluted alcohol, and at the close of each day I experienced less fatigue.

"The other three voyages were to New Orleans, when I ran through the West Indies, Archangel, and Onega. The crews, with the exception of one incurable sot, have expressed themselves as being better pleased than when grog was issued, especially as I substituted for it tea and sugar.

"My plan has always been to have a clear understanding with the crew, and to insert a clause in the articles that no spirituous liquors, either at sea or in harbour, would be issued, and in lieu of which tea and sugar would be given.

"I have never given any increase of wages.

"While at Archangel in 1831 the cholera raged in an awful manner. On my arrival, I was informed that 'if I did not give my crew grog and brandy they would all die.' Perceiving that this plan did not secure those who adopted it, I remained unconvinced, though I allowed the crew to have small-beer. Many of my countrymen belonging to different ships died, yet the plague was not suffered to enter our ship.

"In 1828 I was at Sierra Leone, when I observed

that nearly all who drank freely were either sick or died.

"The full conviction of my mind now is, that if spirituous liquors were excluded from our shipping, except as a medicine, much human life and valuable property would be saved.

"With these facts, and my best wishes for your success, I remain, gentlemen, yours most respectfully,

"CHARLES MARCH,
"Lieut. R.N., and nine years Commander in the Merchant Service."

Whilst thus waiting for such occupation as would enable him conscientiously and happily to care for the future requirements of his household, he and his wife were united with the Congregational church assembling at Bedminster. Here he became superintendent of the girls' school, and spent joyful Sabbaths in listening to the preached word, and caring for the instruction of little children. Apt he was to teach; his practical mind, which abhorred mysticism, and his ready fund of illustration, drawn from his own experience, peculiarly qualified him to make truth plain and interesting to the young. He was also, what is not always the case with instructors, a good hearer; not fastening his eyes on the defects of the discourse, and so being blind to its better portions, but receiving every crumb of spiritual nourishment with gratitude, he rarely failed to obtain profit. His conduct on this score seems to have been in keeping with the counsel:

"Judge not the preacher; for he is thy judge:
If thou mislike him, thou conceiv'st him not.
God calleth preaching folly. Do not grudge
To pick out treasures from an earthen pot,
The worst speak something good, if all want sense,
God takes a text and preacheth patience."

He says, "When I hear a Christian talking about his soul not being fed, I always tell him to cease from man and read the Bible more, which is the fountain of life and all happiness, and if he cannot get good and comfort from the Divine word, something must be wrong in himself."

We have already more than once spoken of the impressions which delivered Captain March from perils on the sea. Similar instinctive feeling now saved him from the deceit and fraud of man. He was introduced by a friend to a lawyer who was supposed to be both godly and opulent, and who, at the captain's request, put out some of his money on mortgage. He subsequently sought for a large sum for his own personal use, offering as security his house and grounds; but the captain, though he blamed his irrepressible suspicion as an unworthy lack of charity, could not feel confidence in him; so the bait was declined, and in a very short while the knavery and insolvency of the man came to light. "When I heard of it," says the journal, "the following passage came forcibly to my mind: 'What man is he that feareth the Lord? him shall he teach in the way he shall choose.' It is a great comfort to my

mind that I cannot doubt His particular superintending providence." Had we more faith in the promises of God, were we more watchful for the whispers of that Spirit which not only sanctifies but guides, would not our course be less fraught with mistake and sorrow? Is it not still true that "the secret of the Lord is with them that fear him?"

At length his patient waiting for more than two years was rewarded. Negotiations for a partnership were entered into with Mr Bird of Gloucester, who carried on a general business connected with the shipping of the port. A letter having so much bearing on the matter as to be almost decisive arrived on the Sabbath. Knowing to what it related, Captain March was disposed to open it at once, especially as he at first thought his mind would be more at rest if he satisfied himself of its contents. Yet he determined to adhere to his rule of appropriating the day as much as possible to religious thought and exercise, and found that he was enabled completely to banish the subject from his mind, and to enter into the services of the sanctuary with far more fixedness of mind than would have been possible to him if he had broken his rule.

On Saturday, February 29, 1835, with his wife and three children and household furniture, he arrived at Gloucester, having the comfortable assurance that the good hand of the Lord had guided them. The new commercial association was continued with unbroken

harmony until the time when he retired altogether from the business, leaving it in the hands of his partner, whom he regarded to the last with feelings of friendship and highest esteem. Not a little custom did these two godly men sacrifice by steadily refusing, as they rendered their accounts, to aid the captains of vessels in defrauding the owners.

After a time the firm purchased several vessels—the *Nicaragua*, *Cambria*, and others, the possession of which was a considerable source of pleasure and profit to the captain. When they returned from or started on their voyages, he would go to the ports where they lay to exercise that oversight which was valuable on account of his extensive nautical knowledge, and which his unconquerable love for all connected with a seafaring life caused him greatly to enjoy. Most of his undertakings prospered, and he did not forget, in an unostentatious way, to use for the glory of God that which He had bestowed upon him; and often did he remark that in those very years when he dedicated most to Christ, a more than corresponding increase in his receipts seemed to betoken the Divine approval. He had a number of pensioners amongst the deserving poor, who every week came to his house for their promised bounty, when he took an opportunity of inquiring after their welfare, and offering them a few words of good counsel. An especial interest, too, did he manifest in old sailors who were past active service, and not a few of

them were rejoiced every Christmas by receiving the means of making good cheer on the festive day. Though liberal, he was always economical. Needless expenditure or waste he carefully shunned, and so had the more to devote to good purposes. Indeed, the Christian who fairly comprehends the spirit of the New Testament, as he remembers the many many needy anxious ones, orphans and widows, and men and women with failing health who are sinking for want of a helping hand, cannot and dare not give way to extravagance, which is a sin against humanity, and must be hateful in the sight of Him who wore the poor man's garb that we might be crowned with heaven's glory.

One of Captain March's first endeavours after his settlement at Gloucester, was to see religious services conducted in the docks for the benefit of the seamen; but to this there was, as there had been previous to his coming, considerable opposition. Land had been refused for building a chapel, and when service was held in an office fitted up by Mr Sturge, an order was issued that the dock-gates were to be locked on the Sabbath. The best that could be done under the circumstances was to get the four Nonconformist ministers to preach in rotation on Sunday afternoon in the chapel nearest to the docks, which happened to be the Independent. This he brought about, and it was for some time continued; and although but few sea-

men could be induced to attend, the services were not without good results. A neat Episcopal sanctuary now stands within the dock-gates.

He had not long been associated with the Congregational church, when he was requested to take the same office which he had held at Bedminster, that of superintendent of the girls' division of the Sabbath school. At first he declined, as he considered that he would be more usefully employed in visiting the sick, but at length yielded to renewed solicitation. The teachers further desired that he would address the assembled scholars in the afternoon, and he reluctantly complied, declaring an oft-repeated conviction of his mind, that he was not adapted for public speaking. Whilst he continued to instruct the children in matters purely spiritual, he thought it right to impart some scientific knowledge in a simple form, which might heighten their admiration for the great Creator and awaken interest in His handiwork. To this end, on one occasion he secured the services of a lecturer on astronomy, and afterwards set the children to the study of the 19th Psalm. This gave rise to some animadversion on the part of a few of the narrow-minded, and there was not wanting one who declared that such a course would soon make infidels of the scholars; but the captain knew very well that they who severed God's works from His word were those who really fostered unbelief.

Though he maintained that he had no aptitude for public speaking, this was very far from being the case, and his self-diffidence was doubtless one of the very elements that helped to qualify him for addressing others. His entrance at a public meeting was always hailed with delight, and the rich vein of humour that ran through all his remarks, his endless store of anecdote, his complete self-possession, and above all his power of keeping closely to the point, rendered him an interesting and truly effective speaker.

An election of deacons taking place in the church, Captain March was one of the chosen. He had whilst at Bristol declined to undertake such a responsible and sometimes difficult office, feeling that it required an experience and judgment to which he was afraid to lay claim; but this time he considered it his duty to accede to the desire of his fellow-Christians, and grateful for their confidence, and looking to God for help, he entered on the new duties, which for many years he fulfilled with fidelity.

Official and commercial engagements did not consume all his time, but he was enabled to pay some attention to the wants and sorrows of the poor. Having been distressed with the sight of several children born with inverted feet, and growing up to all the sorrow of a permanent deformity, by a judicious use of bandages, and metal frames which he constructed himself in many cases, he gradually rectified the malfor-

mation while yet there was some pliability in the limbs. Many were so rescued from a life-long affliction, and in some instances his surgical skill proved a messenger going before the face of the Lord to prepare His way and make His paths straight.

Though busied thus for the welfare of the many, he was not one of those pseudo-philanthropists who neglect home for strangers, so by patient endeavour he strove to guide the spirits of his own beloved children, warped by the ancestral fall, into the paths of sanctity and joy. It is touching to read how, when he had detected his eldest boy in the utterance of a falsehood, he led him apart and prayed God to forgive his error and help him to be better in the future, and left him for a few minutes to pray to God by himself, and returning found the little fellow still on his knees truly grieved at his fault, and anxious for the smile of both fathers, the seen and the unseen.

So the years of "life on shore" passed on; varied, happy years, filled with duty and chequered with care. It was not a perfect life of course. As deacon, as Sunday-school superintendent, as sick visitor, as a father and head of a household, he mourned failings and shortcomings which were more conspicuous to himself than to others; but his aims were good and earnest, and so his life was progressive. As he reached forth to the things that were before, his character ripened. His genial, cheerful disposition was as con-

stant sunshine; and when the writer was in his presence he felt invigorated and refreshed, and learned a deeper reverence for Christ's religion as he saw it softening and ennobling a strong nature, and associated with all the force and courage of a true manhood.

CHAPTER X.

Clouds and Darkness.

"Through waves, through clouds and storms
He gently clears thy way,
Wait thou his time; so shalt the night
Soon end in joyous day."

"Unto the upright there ariseth light in darkness."
—PSALM cxii. 4.

CLOUDS AND DARKNESS.

WHEN the morning has dawned with no unusual brightness, and through a veil of mist the steady shining of the sun has forced its way, and the only sign of the early dimness that remains is a blue haze that lends a summer softness to the distant landscape, we predict a glorious noon, and are somewhat confident that the day will continue fair and bright up to its latest twilight; but if, when the sun has reached its meridian height, the clouds come rolling up, and, mingling in elemental strife, hurl their lightnings, utter their thunder, and scatter their heavy rain, with surprise and disappointment we are reminded that our surest surmises are sometimes incorrect, and that meteorological science only approximates certainty.

Now when Captain March was reaching the prime of life, judging from his previous history and from the usual dealings of God's providence, one might have expected that the remainder of his course would have been comparatively free from severe afflictions. He had known so much of hardship and discipline in earlier days, his piety had been so firmly rooted by

the various forms of opposition which had assailed it, that to the human sight trial might have appeared almost needless for confirming his faith or maturing his character. But it came in one of its sorest forms, repeated bereavement, and because it came we know it was best and requisite. Clouds loomed on the horizon, sad fears were sadly realised, darkness fell on his heart, and storm enveloped his soul, but because the tried man was trustful and God-fearing, the clouds dropped mercy, light arose in the darkness, and precious lessons were learned beneath the solemn shadow that fell from the hand of the Almighty.

And if it was necessary for the great Captain of our Salvation to be made perfect through suffering, to endure the woes of humanity so that we might be convinced of His entire sympathy, much more needful must it be for His servants to be qualified in like manner for the Divine service; and there can be no doubt that the sorrows that came to Captain March's heart and home caused him to lay a stronger hold on the promises of the gospel, to rest with a fuller affection on the deep steadfast love of God, and feel a more real, because a more experimental, sympathy with the sorrow-stricken.

No fewer than four children were snatched from him in infancy. One little son lived but twenty-four days, a daughter but eleven weeks, and two other sons died in the sixth month of their age. None but

parents can understand the hold these little ones had on the hearts of their father and mother. None but Christian parents can know aught of the new endearment lent to Heaven when the infants were uplifted thither. Ere their entrance into life they had been the occasion of many and bright hopes. When they came as precious gifts from God, the intuitive and holy affection poured on them in their helplessness was most godlike, for most unselfish, and when they were removed, whilst the suffering, and the death, and the burial were all sad, yet, through God's truth and grace, there came most welcome relief and certainty to the parents' minds—relief in the thought that the young spirits would be trained by the wisest and best of Fathers, and certainty of their eternal safety as they rested where temptation could not pursue, nor sin harm them.

Far heavier loss befell the captain in January 1842. Another child, a little girl, had just been born to him, when its mother manifested symptoms of delicacy that were alarming.

"*January* 14.—We now began to think that this affliction would be unto death. She said to me to-day, 'Tell the dear children they must go to heaven by the way in which I go, that is by Jesus. They can better spare me than you. We have been lent to each other for a short time; there will be no parting in heaven, you must cast your care upon God, His grace will be sufficient for you. I have often

wished my faith was as strong as yours; but now I find that all is well; it is as I desire; I am calm and resigned."

As she lay in extreme weakness she expressed her thankfulness at having in the days of her health become familiar with Scripture and sacred hymns, for when the control of her mind was almost impossible, sweet and consolatory verses and passages rose spontaneously on the tablets of memory. Consecutive prayer was often too great an effort, and as she failed to complete a supplication she had begun she said, "It is delightful to think God knows my heart."

Throughout eight days she continued to sink, and as her husband watched by her, his heart wrung with mournful reflections, she spoke cheering, soothing words, now assuring him of her own peace and happiness, and now expressing her confidence that God would enable him to bear his affliction and train his children in the right way.

One day, looking tenderly at him, she said, "My dear husband, when you come to die you will not have your affectionate wife to care for you as you are caring for me, but you will have Jesus, which is far better."

Her calmness surprised the medical attendants, and they remarked that such a state of mind was very pleasing, but very rare.

She spoke to the servants personally, beseeching them to seek the faith that would at last support

them as it was supporting her. On the day of her death, when the gray of the winter's morning was stealing into her room, her five children, (the new-born babe being in charge of a friend,) the eldest of whom was but ten years and a half old, were gathered around her, and she bade them farewell with words of wise counsel and pathetic earnestness, bidding them seek to be a joy to their father, and to come to her at last. Says the journal—"In a similar strain of joy and peace she continued to speak at intervals till within a quarter of an hour of her departure, and when the change came it was so tranquil as to be best described by the words of Scripture, 'Falling asleep in Jesus.'"

And now grief descended in full force on the bereaved captain. Accustomed to habits of activity, as long as the lamp of life showed even a flickering flame, he was absorbed in efforts to retard its extinction; but now that it had sunk in the socket, the gloom was great. There was a darkness that could be felt.

Letters of condolence and expressions of sympathy from both near and distant friends were abundant. They were pleasing proofs of affection, but could scarce penetrate to the heart of the sorrow. He says of them, "They are all powerless, God has wounded, and He only can heal." A shadow fell on all things; in his simple way he wrote, "The houses and streets wear a gloomy aspect."

He now resigned the superintendence of the Girls' Sabbath School, that he might devote more time to his motherless little ones. The teachers grieved at his decision, but appreciating his reason, gave full proof of their gratitude for his wise and kindly labours, and expressed their sympathy with him in his trial. Time seemed at first to deepen rather than assuage his sorrow, for daily the extent of his loss became more evident.

"*April* 3.—I find that the time moves on more heavily now than it did before my affliction. I was formerly amazed at its rapidity, but now at its slowness. I hope my sorrow is not sinful; God would have me feel my affliction. My loss is immense, and yet, blessed be God, I am not without His consolations; but for the little religion I have, I believe I should sink under my load. My Sunday school consists of my own children; this day I talked and prayed with each separately, they were all affected. I sometimes weep over them so much that I can scarcely get on. Weep I must, but I hope I do not murmur. They are a comfort to me."

As opportunity presented itself, he took little excursions in the neighbourhood with them. Now spending the afternoon on Robin Hood's hill, where, exhilarated by the pure air and all the wonders of meadow and woodland, they beguiled their father's care with their sweet mirth; now taking them down to Sharpness Point in a boat, where the assembled

ships and the operations of the huge locks were matters of surpassing interest.

Captain March did not however abandon all his old modes of usefulness, but continued to address little gatherings of people in the villages, and to visit in the courts and alleys of the city, his baptism of trial enabling him to speak with fuller experience of the consolations of faith in Christ.

In this same summer he visited Stowmarket with his two eldest children. "It was peculiarly trying," he writes, "for from thence I took my dear wife. The people, houses, streets, fields, and walks, all seemed to speak mournfully of the past. Mr W—— thought I had been guilty of idolatry in loving my wife too much, to which I would reply in Newton's words, 'He must have a steady hand who can draw the exact line between overvaluing and undervaluing his creature comforts.'" Yet

> "He was not all unhappy. His resolve
> Upbore him, and firm faith, and evermore
> Prayer from a living source within the will,
> And beating up through all the bitter world,
> Like fountains of sweet water in the sea,
> Kept him a living soul."

Some years previous to this time Captain March had found a hard substance near his breastbone, which had recently moved two inches lower down. Whilst returning home from Stowmarket, he took the opportunity of consulting Sir William Burnett,

Admiralty physician, when his own opinion—viz., that it was a piece of shot received at the bombardment of Algiers—was confirmed. In his note on the subject, he says, "I remember receiving a small wound in my breast, of which I took no notice at the time. My shirt was so soiled with blood and torn that I threw it away after the action. I felt stiff in my breast for several days, but was not aware that the shot was lodging within." As there was no danger of its shifting to a vital part, and as, if it had been extracted, he would have been detained from his home several days longer than was convenient, he decided on leaving it to take its course, and it remained innocuous in its place to the last.

When the poignancy of his sorrow was lessened, and Time had laid his soothing hand on the grieving heart,—

> "Gently, not smiting it,
> But as a harper lays his open palm
> Upon his harp to deaden its vibrations,"—

desirous that the sad blank made in his home should as far as possible be supplied, and that his little ones, whose terrible deprivation often made his heart bleed, should again enjoy the kindly attention of a mother, he married Mary Ebbs of Beccles. Faithfully and tenderly did she fulfil the duties that, in God's providence, devolved upon her during six years, when sickness seized her; and at Barnstaple, whither her husband had removed her that she might be under

the skilful care of his medical brother James, she died much lamented, and her remains were interred in the old vault of the Colley family.

Though the general tide of Captain March's affairs had, through the blessing of God on his prudence and energy, set in the direction of prosperity, he was not altogether free from occasional checks and depressions that taught him his dependence on God even for material good.

In the spring of 1846, owing to tariff changes and the absorption of capital occasioned by the railway mania, he found much difficulty in obtaining charters for his vessels. Whilst at Liverpool in search of freight, a circumstance, he deemed a providence, but which many would have called a chance, brought about the object of his quest. The simple incident, illustrative of his faith in God's Fatherly care, runs thus:—

"Not being able to hear of any suitable employment for two of the ships, I had given it up in despair, and was about to leave, when, being somewhat perplexed owing to the rigger having got the top-gallant masts and yards up on one of the vessels as she lay in the graving-dock, which was a breach of the regulations, I went to the harbour-master to obtain leave for them to remain as the ship was ready for sea. This being refused, I went in search of the rigger, and on passing through the Exchange, a gentleman who was crossing mistook me for another shipowner,

and, stopping, began to ask me questions about my essels. Having corrected his mistake, I told him that I had a ship here not yet chartered. 'Will you take £6 (per Petersburg standard hundred) for deals from Quebec to London?' he asked. I said, 'Who are the parties?' He named the firm, and said he would conduct me to them. As I went I thought, 'Surely this is like the man bearing a pitcher of water whom the disciples were told to follow.' I must here remark that, two or three days previous to this, I felt a great weight of earthly care upon my mind; and having slept but little during the night, I rose early with a determination to cast myself more fully on God, and having read the 25th Psalm, fell on my knees and turned it into prayer. I rose with my heart and countenance no more sad. I knew that the very hairs of my head were all numbered, and that God would direct me."

The ship was chartered to his satisfaction. The next year intelligence reached him that the *Cambria* was waterlogged and abandoned, the captain and three of the crew having been washed overboard. Never expecting to hear of the vessel again, he reckoned up his loss, acknowledging God's right to take away what He had given.

Two months later he received information from the underwriters at Liverpool that the *Cambria*, which must have drifted eight hundred miles in ten weeks, was off the coast of Ireland, and had been towed into

Dunmain Bay. He at once hastened to see what remained of his property. The ship was a melancholy spectacle; for three days and nights she had been on the rocks, and was so damaged that the water flowed in and out of her. He says of it—"This ship had been a beautiful specimen of naval architecture, and now vanity was written upon her, and painful indeed it was to remember that Captain Lush and three hands had been launched into eternity." Though what remained of the vessel and cargo was sold, and the underwriters fulfilled their compact, the loss was considerable, and served to teach him the philosophy of the caution—"If riches increase, set not your heart upon them." "Riches certainly take to themselves wings, they fly away."

It was almost to be expected that Charles, the eldest son of Captain March, should desire a seafaring life, the excitements and enjoyments of which had often been the theme of home conversation. There were, too, at Gloucester, some of the same surroundings which at Barnstaple many years before had lured his father over the restless waters. None, therefore, can be surprised at the following entry:—

"*February* 25, 1847.—After some prayer and thought I have consented to allow my eldest son Charles to go a voyage in the *Nicaragua* with Captain Marshall, a godly man. The ship proceeds to Virginia. Soon after tea he took leave of us and joined

the ship at Hempstead, a mile down the canal. All that I could think of by way of advice or warning has been said to him, either in writing or verbally. He is a child of many prayers, may the God of all grace watch over him and keep him from evil."

But, unlike his father, he was not destined to live a long life of usefulness. The parent's hopes were blighted, and sadness fell on the young brothers and sisters when tidings came over the seas that the light-hearted sailor lad was no more.

"*May* 23, 1849.—Received a letter from Captain Crathorne, of the *Fides*, announcing the mournful intelligence of the death of my dear son Charles, after about two months' suffering with the dysentery. He departed this life on the 14th of April, on his voyage from Alexandria to Liverpool, about twelve leagues to the westward of Sardinia, where his body was consigned to the deep, there to remain till the sea shall give up her dead. Blessed be God, we sorrow not as those who have no hope. His increased respect for religion and aversion to evil were pleasing features in his character. I often reflected with joy upon his being a comfort and blessing to his brothers and sisters after my removal, but God determined it otherwise. Captain Crathorne tells me that two days before his death he noticed him sitting on the hen-coop reading, 'Chorazin; or, the Child of Many Prayers,' a book that his sister Mary had given him. The dear boy had a great desire to go to the

Mediterranean, and I was glad to be able to gratify it, and to know that he was under the care of one who would watch over his spiritual welfare. Thus five of my children out of ten, together with their mother, are, I doubt not, enjoying that happiness which 'eye hath not seen, nor ear heard,' and which has been purchased for us by the merits of our ever blessed Redeemer."

As thus the lights and shadows were flitting over his life, Captain March was interested in aiding, as far as he was able, by counsel and contribution, the erection of a new congregational sanctuary at Gloucester. From the very foundation he watched its progress, and when the chaste Gothic building was at the point of completion, mounting the highest scaffolding, he saw that the topmost pinnacles were securely fixed. Some who had inherited the spirit of Puritan repugnance to material forms of beauty, considered the architecture of the new chapel a step in the wrong direction. Not so the captain, who held it to be man's duty to honour God with the best of everything, and found the gospel as precious in the tasteful chapel as it could have been to any of his ancestors in the unsightly meeting-houses of the past century.

The repeated bereavements of which we have spoken, and which were to be followed by others as sad, did not involve him as they would have done some in habitual gloom. He could not rejoice in

the trials themselves, for "no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous but grievous;" but he could and did "rejoice in the Lord alway," and his afflictions afterward "yielded the peaceable fruits of righteousness unto him who was exercised thereby." At times his gladness of soul was surprisingly great. He wrote :—

"*May* 28, 1853.—The goodness of God continues to follow me day by day. I have had such a kind sense of it for some time past, that I have frequently been quite overcome. Tears of joy have rolled down my cheeks when I have been walking in the streets, so that I have endeavoured to avoid meeting people, and longed to be alone where none could interrupt my enjoyment.

'Oh to grace how great a debtor
Daily I'm constrained to be.'

My prayer is, 'Lord show me then what Thou wouldest have me to do.'"

Seven years after the blue waters of the Mediterranean had closed over his eldest son Charles, Captain March followed the remains of his youngest son Alfred to an untimely grave. At the age of seventeen he fell a prey to consumption. He had no fear of death, but desired the rest of heaven; his faith in Christ's promise to save was firm, and so he quietly submitted to the Divine will.

Three years later we find the following entry :—

"*Feb.* 17, 1859.—Time rolls on almost imperceptibly; more than two years have elapsed since I last opened this book. I am now called to mourn the departure of another beloved child, my daughter Ann. For some years past she has been in a delicate state of health. She seems to have feared God from her birth, having always manifested a hatred to sin and a love for divine things. She first joined the Church of Christ at Birmingham, under the pastoral care of the Rev. J. A. James, about nine years since, and was principally brought to this decision by an interview with the Rev. C. G. Finney of America, who was visiting the school where she was. Entering a room where she sat alone, he asked her if she was a child of God. She answered that she trusted she could say she was; and as he continued to speak encouragingly, her resolution to avow her attachment to Christ was formed. A friend once asked her if she kept a diary. 'No,' was the answer, 'I should be afraid it would be read after my death, and the thought of that would make me think more about self than Christ.' A few months since she said, 'I have been happier since I knew that I should die young, although I have enjoyed life very much. I do not wish to live any longer, knowing that I shall be able to serve and praise God better in heaven.' Her Sunday-school class was always an object of her careful attention, and the preparation for the Sabbath engagements cost her many hours of study during the

week. When no longer able to meet them in the school, she continued to feel a lively interest in their spiritual welfare. More than once she was heard to say, 'Oh my poor scattered class, I often think of them.' Last night she was much the same as she had been for several days past, her weakness great and her breathing difficult. She employed part of the evening in making arrangements for the distribution of books to the members of her class. About five o'clock this morning she was seized with a violent fit of coughing, which left her in a very prostrate condition. After this she closed her eyes and appeared to be dying, until about half-past eleven, when she again opened them, and with great difficulty said, in an almost inaudible voice, 'Mind and trust Him to the end, mind you all do.'"

The journal continues to relate circumstantially an apparent revealing of heavenly things to her departing spirit. When the household, at her request, was assembled round her bed that she might bid them farewell, exhaustion for some minutes overcame her, but suddenly she revived, and seeming to behold some fair and distant scene, exclaimed, "Beautiful! beautiful!" and as her voice increased in power, "Glorious! Jesus!" Then there passed over her intently-gazing face a look of indescribable astonishment, and she cried, "Mamma! Charles! Alfred!" Another countenance apparently caught her attention, which she scrutinised with wonderment, saying,

"There's some one else. Who is it? I can't remember." The name of a recently departed friend was mentioned. "No, it was not she." After a pause recognition seemed to flash on her, and she added, "Oh yes, I know now, it is my second mother."

Some will call this a brain phantasy, a mere delirium. It may have been so, and it may have been something else. When around the martyr Stephen his enemies closed with fiercest purpose written on their lowering brows, "He being full of the Holy Ghost looked up steadfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God and Jesus standing on the right hand of God, and said, Behold I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God," and when he fell beneath the crushing stones he spake with that uprisen Saviour whom he had so distinctly seen. Was this but a delusion? Does not God at times quicken the sight of spirits about to be loosened from the bondage of the flesh? Do they not sometimes see loved faces looking from heaven's lattice to bid them welcome home? And does it never happen that when the trembling feet touch the brink of Jordan's dark-flowing river, that the Father opens a rift in the opposing gloom and so lets out the glories of heaven, which, streaming downward, make a golden path across the flood, up which without a sigh or shudder the soul may pass to the presence of Christ? Who will venture to say "No."

After this strange experience, she turned to the members of the family, and to the servants who stood near, and said to each, "Mind you are *there*," and naming some of her distant relations, she desired that a message might be sent to them from her deathbed urging them to be *there*. Two hours of rapt thought followed, during which time she was not once unconscious, and then the end came. "Soon after two o'clock in the afternoon she literally 'fell asleep in Jesus.'"

Three children remained to the captain, a son and two daughters, who were spared to be his comfort to the last. The rest were "gone before;" four infants whom the Saviour had loved and taken, and three who, having grown up to years of discretion, left ground for fullest hope of their eternal happiness, had followed their sainted mother. The good seed sown in the peaceful home had taken root. The graves of the departed household are severed, but their spirits are in one home.

"And parted thus they rest, who played
Beneath the same green tree,
Whose voices mingled as they prayed
Around one parent knee.
They that with smiles lit up the hall,
And cheered with song the hearth,
Alas! for love if thou wert all,
And nought beyond, O earth!"

CHAPTER XI.

Entering Port.

"Thou art my pilot wise,
My compass is Thy word;
My soul each storm defies,
While I have such a Lord.
I trust Thy faithfulness and power
To save me in the trying hour.

"Though rocks and quicksands deep
Through all my passage lie,
Yet Christ will safely keep
And guide me with His eye.
My anchor, hope, shall firm abide,
And I each boisterous storm outride.

"By faith I see the land,
The port of endless rest;
My soul, thy sails expand,
And fly to Jesus' breast!
Oh may I reach the heavenly shore,
Where winds and waves distress no more."

—TOPLADY.

"A mind fixed and bent upon somewhat that is good, doth avert the dolours of death. But above all, believe it, the sweetest canticle is 'Nunc dimittis' when a man hath attained worthy ends and expectations."—BACON.

ENTERING PORT.

IT was at Brighton, soon after the loss of his daughter Ann, that I first stayed under the same roof with my uncle, and deep and precious were the impressions his character made upon me. I fancy I see him now, sitting reading on the beach under the shadow of a boat, pausing every now and then to skim the horizon with his old and trusty glass. How well I remember his conducting family worship—bending over the old and worn Bible with which he was so familiar; he slowly moved the great burning-glass, which served him in lieu of spectacles, over the lines, bringing out the words, as he desired to read them, into bold prominence. Occasionally he would look up, and telling some fact of his past history, some incident of his voyages, would so cast illustrative light on the verse in question. His remark being often introduced by some such preface as, "When I was in the White Sea," or "Whilst off Malta," at once arrested the attention of all. Altogether it was the most striking practical commentary with which I had ever met.

His nautical knowledge would every now and then,

much to my interest, peep out conspicuously. One day his son and a nephew, whilst a mile or two out at sea in a fishing-boat, were overtaken by a storm, and being unable to fetch the beach at Brighton, they came ashore below Hove. Having tracked their course with a glass, we hastened off to meet them, and on arriving found that the little vessel had been hauled up high and dry by a number of boatmen. Ere leaving the captain jumped into her, and in a trice lashed the ropes together that were knocking against the mast, and made all perfectly snug and taut. The men nodded approvingly one to another, and said: "He knows all about it, he's an old hand."

But what struck me more than anything else, was the good-humoured, frank, inoffensive way in which he spoke straight to men's souls in endeavouring to do them good. One Sunday morning as we were proceeding along the Parade, a fisherman came toiling up the beach laden with dripping nets, "Well, Jack, said your prayers this morning?" exclaimed my uncle. "No, sir, I ha'nt *yet*," was the reply. "Well then, I'd do it the first thing, if I were you," and we passed on. Another time we were overtaken by a heavy storm of rain, and ran for shelter under a large portico, and several other persons followed our example. Addressing one of these the captain said, "We all need a shelter sometimes, don't we?" and then proceeded in the kindest and most unaffected manner to talk about

the soul's need of God. The man listened wonderingly, attentively, and when the storm ceased went away evidently turning over in his mind the least official sermon he had ever heard.

Previous to this time the health of Captain March had begun somewhat to fail. One winter while skating he had a severe fall, and was picked up insensible, after having lain for some time on the ice. From that period, whether as a consequence or a coincidence it is impossible to say, his vigour diminished, and soon after the visit to Brighton above named, he was seized with alarming symptoms of heart disease.

He had now to abstain from all excitement, and so sent in his resignation of the office of deacon. The ground for this step was so obvious and imperative that the church offered no opposition to it; but with many expressions of sympathy and regard, elected him to the less onerous but equally honourable office of elder. Being thus relieved from all financial cares and responsibilities, he was yet appointed to advise with the church on all spiritual matters, and to visit the sick and poor as his strength permitted. His connection with the Sabbath school being also severed, he nevertheless undertook to call on the afflicted children and their parents if the teachers would furnish him with their names and addresses.

The entries in the journal from this period become more rare. Not that he had not more leisure than

formerly for noting down his experiences, but in the Christian man, as the end of life seems drawing near, there is usually less disposition for recording passing circumstance and feeling. The thought presses onward to the great and solemn future, in view of which the details of earthly existence seem tame and insignificant. "The spirit gathers itself into itself, and poising itself for its flight, becomes oblivious of what is passing round it."

Such records as are at this time made, refer chiefly to visits paid to the sick and dying. He delighted thus to fulfil the behest of his Master, and to familiarize his mind with that change which ere long would pass upon himself. In these efforts of usefulness he was often more successful than many ordained ministers. On one occasion he heard of an ungodly publican who was dying, and sought admission to his chamber, but was denied it, under the impression that he was a clergyman or some other special religious agent, but when he sent word that he was an old sea captain he was at once invited up. Beginning his conversation with a few nautical anecdotes he led the way to the truth as it is in Christ, which, as he faithfully pressed it home, was wonderingly and not unwillingly received. Do not facts like this teach us the value of lay-agency and the folly of a needless officialism in ministers of the gospel?

In the fall of 1860, I spent a few weeks with my uncle at Gloucester. It was a glorious season, and we strolled out together at times through richly

laden orchards and woodlands, all aglow with bright autumnal hues, I rejoiced in the beauty of the declining year; but more refreshing was the sight of the peaceful fruitful autumn of the Christian elder who walked by my side. From his varied history he showed me many a proof of the faithfulness and goodness of God and the truth of His promises. He was happy in the memory of the past, and looking onward faced the future even more cheerily than I, a hopeful youth.

There still remained to him at this time much of his former muscular vigour. I remember challenging him to vault a gate, not dreaming that in his state of health and at his time of life he would comply, but over he went with the nimbleness of a gymnast.

By the close of 1860, disease had laid a yet firmer hold upon him. As he had until recently enjoyed almost uninterrupted health, and lived a life of almost ceaseless activity, the effect at first was depressing. As he took the cup in the hours of deepening twilight it seemed a bitter draught.

"*Dec.* 16.—Yesterday I reached my sixty-seventh year, which vividly recalled to my mind the goodness and mercy of God, both spiritual and temporal, all the days of my life. I have now every reason to believe that my years are drawing to a close, disease having affected my heart in such a way as at times almost to deprive me of life. What has somewhat added to my affliction has been the want of consola-

tion in religion. Having enjoyed much spiritual comfort in my day, perhaps more so than many, having in health been so blessed with the Divine presence and favour, I did anticipate that I should be filled with peace and joy in the hour of affliction. This disappointment sadly distressed me and made me weep like a child, for I thought I was dishonouring God, who had been so kind to me. Yet my faith in the atonement and sacrifice of Christ seemed stronger than ever, for never did I feel more need of such a Saviour as I find revealed to me in the Holy word. For days and nights I prayed that the Holy Spirit might glorify the Son of God in my soul, and take of the things of Christ and show them unto me, and that He would be my comforter. My views also of the Father's love to our lost world in giving His only Son to suffer for us were bright and clear,—indeed I have not been troubled with the slightest doubt of the truth of the Bible.

"Blessed be God, I am this morning (Sunday) somewhat restored to a calm and settled peace, which I trust may abide. As I have always told people during my life that my religion made me a happier man and had taken away the sting of death, I trust God will not suffer me to falsify the assertion when I come to die. My sins appear immense, like the sands upon the sea-shore, but, blessed be God, the blood of Christ can cleanse them all away. This I do firmly believe."

The following entry, made in the same week, has a peculiar interest when it is remembered that Captain March was one of the most practical and least superstitious of men. "About two o'clock this morning I had a most delightful vision. As I was sitting up in my arm-chair, (his disease prevented his lying down,) a person came by my side and repeated several verses of a hymn. The voice and the language were most beautiful, setting forth the love of the Saviour in saving and redeeming lost sinners. The voice continued after I awoke and saw the glimmer of the gas-light in the room. The words of the hymn I could not remember, but they left upon my mind a calm and heavenly feeling which I cannot attempt to describe. Whilst the verses were being repeated I wondered whose voice it could be. I knew it was neither of my daughters; it was wonderfully soft and melodious. And now what conclusion am I to come to? why, that it is a sweet answer to my many prayers."

Was this a mere dream and illusion. It may have been so, and it may not. Does not Scripture say of the angels, "Are they not all ministering spirits sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation." Has any one yet defined how they do and do not minister to us? Does not Paul tell us that there stood by him the angel of God, who began his consolation with the words, "Fear not, Paul"? Do we not read concerning Christ in His agony, that "there appeared an angel unto Him from heaven, strengthen-

ing Him"? Is it altogether incredible or impossible that comfort should have been delivered to this departing Christian in a similar way?

The months passed on, and still the weather-beaten vessel kept afloat. Sometimes when the end seemed near there would come a lull in the storm and it would hold on its course with less of difficulty and more of hope. The great trial to the captain was the necessary inaction of his position. Fatigue or excitement would, he was told, prove fatal, and his own experiences confirmed the medical statement; so most of his time was now spent in his own home, save when occasionally he was well enough to seek a change in our English watering-places.

In December 1860, he wrote: "Oh how I long for entire submission to God's holy will, and that my affliction may be more and more sanctified to me! It was an easier thing to serve God by an active life than it is to sit still and wait. Oh for more faith and patience to wait on God and lie passive in His hand! I trust my affliction is working for me some lasting good, yet I do not feel this as I could desire. But I must not forget that it is written that 'no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous but grievous.'"

Little encouragement is there here for those who look to the sick-chamber as a place for repentance, or for the maturing of the spiritual life which before has been neglected.

Though inactive compared with former years, when

he passed to and fro on the high seas, he was always employed in some way or another: now amusing himself at his turning lathe manufacturing various articles of domestic utility and ornament; now exercising his art of amateur bookbinder, repairing and binding old books and magazines for the Sunday school he always loved so well.

The summer of 1864 found him still struggling with his weakness. It was hard for the strong man to feel death gradually winding his meshes about him, but he uttered no word of repining.

At the end of July he received his appointment from the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty to the rank and title of Commander in the Royal Navy. Late laurels! His last summer on earth was waning even now into the sallow autumn, and what were such honours as these to one who ere long would receive the reward of the faithful, hear the Master's "Well done, good and faithful servant," and be welcomed to the fellowship of the saints in light. He had served his king and country well, but his God and Saviour better. Wherever he had been, the standard of the cross was uplifted and the God of glory worshipped. He had fought a good fight, finished his course and kept the faith, henceforth there was laid up for him a crown of righteousness, which the Lord will give to all that love His appearing.

Yet of course he did not refuse the appointment and the increase of pay; from the first instalment of

the latter he at once sent a sum to a poor woman in feeble health, that she might be enabled to go from home for change of air.

In the fall of the year he went with his daughters into South Wales, and was not only benefited, but according to his wont pleased with the change. Not having stimulated and pampered an appetite for repeated novelties and exciting enjoyments, sky and shore, meadow and woodland, and the presence of those he loved, afforded him the truest earthly happiness.

He was very fond of getting by the sea, and doubtless as he looked on the restless waters, and the dim and distant sails flitting over them, he recalled the adventures and vicissitudes of the past, and in his calm, unruffled retirement, contrasting as it did with his former wanderings, experienced a foretaste of the peace of those who from the Father's house look out on the troubled sea of life and watch the voyagers battling with waves that they have left behind for ever.

In October he returned home, to leave it no more till sorrowful hands bore him to the place of sepulture.

" A little longer yet— a little longer,
The voices thou hast loved shall charm thine ear,
And thy true heart, that now beats quick to hear them,
A little longer yet shall hold them dear.

" A little longer still, and heaven awaits thee,
And fills thy spirit with a great delight ;

Then our pale joys shall seem a dream forgotten,
Our sun a darkness, and our day a night."

The last entry was made in January 1865, not many weeks before his death. "I do believe my constitution is fast breaking up, and that disease is making such progress in me that it will not now recede. Blessed be God for a calm and cheerful hope, although it is not always experienced. I do not doubt God's mercy to me through the merits of His Son. I only want to *rejoice* in His salvation, yet sore affliction deprives me of this by the inroads it makes on my mind. Oh my God, as my day so please let my strength be, that I may trust Thee at all times and fear no evil! Increase my faith and all the graces of the Holy Spirit, that I may honour Thee in this furnace of affliction." Then follow the blank pages.

Having traced the captain's jottings from early times when life and the world were before him, having deciphered them from pages yellow with time, and little books worn with their voyagings to remote places of the earth, having seen in them the development of a useful Christian life, it is touching to come to this abrupt conclusion. But we know that though the hand is still that penned them, the soul lives in consciousness and joy. Touching too are these final words, "this furnace of affliction." So the course characterized for the most part by keen enjoyment had come to this! But he knew that though he suffered, he suffered not as the Master had done for

him, that he had the Saviour's sympathy, and that when the dying was over and the blessed death, which was the fullest life, had come, he should be satisfied as he awoke in the Divine likeness, the final scorchings of the furnace and operations of the Spirit having purged away the remnants of earthly dross that marred the soul.

The last days had now come. Occasionally his mind wandered, and he fancied himself amidst the scenes of earlier times, now on duty as a midshipman in the Royal Navy, and now in command of a merchant vessel. One night his ramblings showed that he was back again amidst the perils of the Bay of Fundy. Truly as then he was "laying to" till the eternal day should dawn, and God's own light guide him past all dangers to his peaceful harbour.

At another time in apparent distress he sent for his eldest daughter and told her that he "could not gather the saints, and that Jesus was waiting for them." Now when a captain in the merchant service it often happened that, though the vessel was ready for sailing, all hands were not on board, and he had with some difficulty to go and hunt them out from their various quarters in the port. To this his mind seems now to have reverted. He himself is about to depart from the shores of life; there are many Christian friends he is loath to leave behind, he wants them to accompany him across the dark waters; Christ is waiting, there is no time to be lost, he cannot gather

them. No, he must go alone as we all must, each in his appointed time.

As soon as he had said "Christ is waiting," his daughter replied, "If I were you I would leave it to Him." "Ah, so I will," he said, and his anxiety appeared at an end.

When conscious, he often spoke with satisfaction of his assurance that soon he would be with his Saviour.

At 8 A.M. on March 17, 1865, his spirit passed. When the day dawned dim and sad "he had another morn than ours." When the rigours of winter were well-nigh over, and the first vernal breath began to stir the pulses of the spring, he awoke to inherit the fadeless youth of immortality.

So he "entered port." The storms had been roughest and the skies darkest as he ended his voyage, but it was with him as with all God's children, "They cry unto the Lord in their trouble, and He bringeth them out of their distresses. He maketh the storm a calm, so that the waves thereof are still. Then are they glad because they be quiet; so He bringeth them unto their desired haven."

CHAPTER XII.

Vale!

VALE!

FAREWELL, good man and true! The firm, kindly, honest face, the bent, familiar form, the cheery word and laugh we miss. Where the happy English hills look down on the valley of the Severn, the body rests till Christ shall bid it rise. Farewell, servant of God, till we meet where, our frailties swept away, our intercourse shall be fuller and sweeter than ever before.

Many were the letters of condolence and loving tributes to the memory of Captain March that poured in upon his children, but their insertion would be foreign to the purpose of this volume. There is, however, one wreath — the brightest that can be placed on the good man's tomb—which we present to the reader; the expression through their pastor of the love and esteem in which a band of Christian brothers held their now sainted comrade. From the letter, addressed by the Rev. W. Young, B.A., to Miss March, I make the following extract:—

"At our meeting, held on the evening of the 30th of last month, I was unanimously requested to write

and convey to the members of Captain March's family the church's deep sense of the loss it had sustained in his death, and assurances of genuine sympathy with his bereaved family. Those who knew your father longest and most intimately esteemed him most highly. A man of great honesty and sincerity, of great force and decision of character, of earnest and devoted piety, he was necessarily a power amongst us, and the church very gratefully recognizes the worth of his services, and cherishes the memory and influence of his example. *We* shall miss his prayers, his wise counsel, his fearless fidelity to conscientious conviction which made him a tower of strength in times of perplexity and difficulty, and his ready and generous help. How much and frequently *you* all will miss him you alone can tell."

Farewell, reader! These memoirs have been penned not to extol the dead, but to cheer and help the living. This life, with divine good contending against, and in the main, and increasingly to the end, triumphing over natural evil, is but one of many, more or less Christ-like, which are yet growing daily in spiritual beauty. Many besides Captain March are, in their several homes, trusting, loving, imitating the Saviour, receiving help of the Holy Ghost, serving their God, and so are calmly and hopefully facing the future. Is it so with us? It may be so with all. Let us copy what was noble in him of whom these

pages have spoken; like him let us rest on the atonement of Christ as the alone ground of our hope, and prove the sincerity of our faith and love by our diligent obedience to the Divine will; like him, "in everything," small or great, that in any way affects our welfare and peace, "let us by prayer and supplication," not with petulant complainings, but "with thanksgiving make known our requests unto God;" like him let us be conscientious in the little, lest we prove at last unfaithful in the much; like him let us be bold to own our attachment to Christ, and seek, in spite of rebuffs and opposition, to "compel" men to come into the kingdom of God; like him let us be happy Christians as far as in us lies, that we may not misrepresent the natural and purposed effects of the glad tidings of great joy that come to us from the "happy God." And yet, my brother, you must look far higher for your complete model—to Christ Himself, and then, through God's grace, you may come to live even a better, braver life than that of which you have now read.

Farewell seaman! into whose hands this book may have fallen. Much has been done and said and written for the spiritual welfare of the soldiers of our country, may this volume prove an acceptable and useful contribution to the efforts of such as care for those who do business on great waters. The influence of our sailors for good or evil is indeed great. Touching at every port in the world where British

enterprise has opened the channels of commerce, their habits, language and lives, drop seeds whose harvest of tares or wheat must be incalculably vast. Numerous and active are our various missionary societies, but have not their efforts too often been neutralized by the vices of our seamen? Oh that God would pour His Spirit largely on those who for valour and endurance have justly been England's boast, that she may be yet more proud of them for the purity, godliness, and moral courage of their lives! Would they were all Christ's servants, then should we have a missionary society more powerful than all the combined evangelistic agencies in existence.

Living as I do in a port, I know some of the temptations that surround sailors, and some of their excuses for neglecting to care for their souls' health. When I have sought to press home the truth upon them, I have been met again and again with the assurance that religion was "impossible to a sailor; when they lived ashore, as they hoped to do some day, they would turn over a new leaf."

Religion impossible to sailors! then must salvation be impossible, and when they die, they die to be lost. It is not impossible. They may have many temptations, but these are trivial in comparison with the temptations which surrounded the early Christians, when feeble women and timid youths braved persecution and death rather than deny their Master.

And is not the promise of Scripture still true for all: "God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape that ye may be able to bear it." Impossible! It is the devil's suggestion, the devil's lie. You will wait till a quiet life on shore shall smooth the path of piety? It may not come, or coming may find you irretrievably hardened in your indifference. Impossible! it is not. The history you have read says it is not. The godly lives of men I know in various grades of office who sail from this port where I dwell, say it is not. God says it is not; and will you, when you have not fairly tried it, still say it is?

Has a seaman's life its hindrances? has it not also its aids to godliness? Is it nothing that such "see the works of the Lord and His wonders in the deep?" They may be brought in close contact with irreligion and profanity, but have they not most of them periods of blessed solitude? In the lone watch, when nought is heard save the water's plash, the creak of the timbers, and the sound of the wind amongst the cordage, and when the stars look down in quiet beauty from on high, cannot the heart then rise up in worship and prayer to God? Are there not times of storm when the voice of the Lord is heard and the power of the Lord witnessed, and the most careless are compelled to think of the great Supreme? Have you not these and other helps to religious reflection? And believe

me that the landsman has more temptations than you may imagine. Be assured that

> "There are briars besetting every path
> Which call for patient care,
> There is a cross in every lot,
> And an earnest need for prayer:
> But a lowly heart that leans on God
> Is happy anywhere."

My brother, I plead with you. He of whom I have written pleads with you. How would he rejoice if the story of his life proved the salvation of yours. Christ who died for you, bearing the penalty due to your sins, who suffered that you might go free and learn at the same time through His own anguish God's intense abhorrence of evil, He pleads with you. Yield yourself unto Him.

We may never meet on earth, I pray you let us meet in heaven, being "followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises." Farewell.

THE END.

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CHAPTER XII.

Vale!